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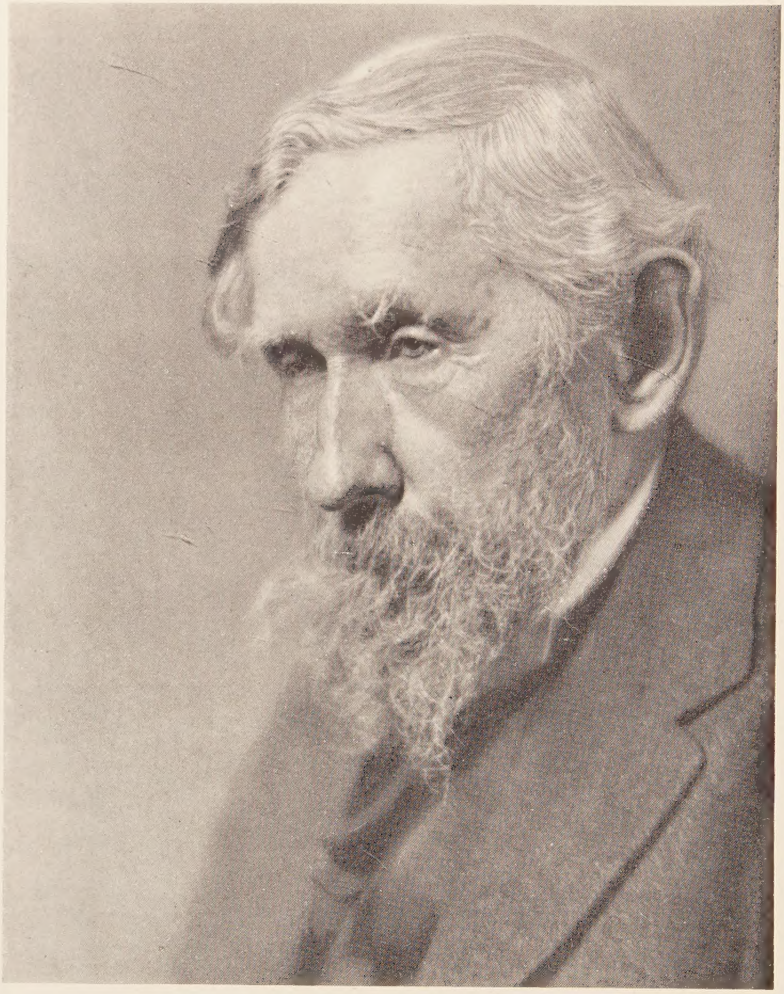
THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOSEPH PENNELL

VOLUME ONE



JOSEPH PENNELL

Photograph by Carlo Leonetti

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF
JOSEPH PENNELL

BY ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL

With Illustrations

VOLUME ONE

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TO EDWARD LAROCQUE
AND FRANCES TINKER

I dedicate my Life of Joseph Pennell in appreciation for their sympathy and support

PREFACE

The Adventures of which Joseph Pennell made a book filled but a part of his life. There is much else that could and should be recorded of a man and artist whose individuality was proof against modern standardization, who, as American illustrator, worked in the great period of American illustration, and who was associated with the most important art exhibitions and movements of his day. This is my reason for writing his biography.

I have let him tell his story in his own words as far as possible. His letters are as full of character as he was himself. When away on his long journeys he wrote to me almost every day but, unfortunately, while the greater part of our early correspondence escaped in the London warehouse where damp destroyed so many of our possessions, next to nothing remains of the years from 1894 to 1917. Friends, however, have come generously to my rescue. I have published the letters as they are, only here and there adding punctuation and missing words or correcting hasty spelling which might mislead, for these are the little services he usually asked of me when we were together. He wrote as he talked and often he talked what Whistler used to call shorthand, too impetuous to bother about details so long as he said what he wanted to say. I remember with amusement his indignation when South Kensington Museum returned a check he had endorsed and deposited, because it was signed by a Pennell with three n's in his name, though it was paid to a Pennell with only two. "I will put as many damned n's in my name as I choose," Pennell said in his wrath, and I could

scarcely induce him to sign again. That was his attitude. Also, in his letters as in his talk, he was plain-spoken, too good a Quaker to be anything else anywhere at any time. The one comment of an old London friend, who heard I was writing Pennell's life and did not intend "to gild him", was, "If she did, it would take a lot of gilding." But the disguise of gilt would be a poor substitute for his unflinching honesty, his strong convictions, his courage and picturesqueness in expressing them. The clue to his character is that he was both Quaker and artist.

His supreme interest was art; everything else was subordinated to it. He was under the control, if ever a man was, of that strong power called the "spirit" by Quakers and "instinct" by the world's people, and it is extraordinary how seldom it failed him. Some one who knew him well told him once, "You usually are so right, Joseph, it is a pity you sometimes go so wrong." When he said what he had to say as an art critic, it was less his disapproval that offended than his words for it. Not every one has so fine a sense of humor as the victim who enjoyed his dismissal of her work as a magnificent monument of mediocrity, or the rare reader who read aright his description of the Sistine Madonna in Dresden as a shoddy piece of commercialism.

His tendency to shorthand led him at times to the use of certain words as symbols. From the days so long ago, when he first set foot on Italian soil, he was a lover of Italy and the Italians. He had the right appreciation of the Negro. He counted many Jews among his friends. The gradual passing away of the Yankee from America was one of the tragedies of his later years. And yet, Dago, Nigger, Jew, Yankee, as terms of opprobrium are forever

cropping up in his letters. No reader of intelligence can fail to grasp the qualities they stand for, as he used them. But all readers are not intelligent; the man of strong character seldom wins the approval of the multitude, and during his lifetime his picturesque shorthand made him many enemies. His books, however, have been too widely read, his influence has been too great for doubt to linger now as to his power of making friends as well—friends whose friendship remained staunch unto the last.

The letters I print would be further proof were it needed. My gratitude is great to the many who have lent them and my regret no less that I had not space for all placed at my disposal. The list of those who helped me in this fashion is long: Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, Mr. Alfred R. McIntyre, Doctor John C. Van Dyke, Mr. Harrison S. Morris, Mr. John F. Braun, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Larocque Tinker, Mr. D. Croal Thomson, Mr. A. E. Gallatin, Professor Doctor Hans W. Singer, Mr. Butler Wood, Mr. Edward Robins, Miss Helen J. Robins, Miss Blanche Robins, Friend Susanna Kite ("Teacher Sue"), Mrs. Laurent Oppenheim, Mrs. George P. Douglas, Mr. Walter M. Grant, Mr. Robert G. Leinroth, Mr. George J. C. Grasberger, Mr. Charles Sessler, Mr. Stan V. Henkels, Mr. Elmer Adler, Mrs. Armistead Peter, 3d, Mrs. Arnold Brunner, Mrs. Alice D. Shipley Halsey, Mrs. William P. Buffum, Mr. Henry Saunders, Mr. William S. Kinney, Miss Helen Wright, Mr. Harry O. Knerr, Mrs. H. A. Pike.

Many artists have contributed: Mr. J. McLure Hamilton, Mr. Frank Morley Fletcher, Mr. John Copley, Mr. Charles Z. Klauder, Mr. D. S. McLaughlan, Mr. H.

Devitt Welsh, Miss Mary Butler, Mr. A. S. Hartrick, Mr. E. J. Sullivan, Mr. Alfred Withers, Mr. Albert Rosenthal, Mrs. Catharine Morris Wright, Mr. Sidney C. Lomas, Secretary of the Philadelphia Sketch Club.

Also, many of his students: Mr. Charles Locke, Mrs. Bessie M. Brewer, Mr. J. Howard Benson, Mr. William Beekman, Miss Catharine S. Van Brunt, Mrs. M. L. Cadmus.

My reason for gratitude does not end with this generous contribution of letters. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Larocque Tinker have smoothed my path as biographer by giving me the freedom of their Pennell Collections and in more ways besides than I would find it easy to tell. Mr. F. Weitenkampf has personally aided my researches in the Print Room of the New York Public Library. Mr. Mitchell Kennerley, at the Anderson Galleries, furnished me with many facilities and much information I would not otherwise have obtained. Messrs. Frederick Keppel and Company, as always throughout Joseph Pennell's life, never failed when called upon for aid or information. To Mr. Arthur Page I owe the privilege of printing the letters of his father, Walter Hines Page. But for Mr. Albert Cook Myers, the authority on Penn and the Quakers, I would have known nothing of the early history of the Pennells and the Bartons, and only the question of space has kept me from publishing the facts and genealogies he collected and prepared for me. Mr. Walter Penn Shipley appealed to the archives for the correct date of Joseph Pennell's birth, and Mr. James Shields was indefatigable in looking up everything of interest in connection with the house where he was born and the house where he spent his early child-

hood. Mr. Howard F. Stratton, his fellow student, contributed the two early drawings I reproduce and drew upon his reminiscences for my benefit. Mr. W. H. Shingle supplied memories of school days. Mr. H. Devitt Welsh not only lent me letters and gave me photographs, but he and Mr. E. H. Suydam allowed me to consult rare items in their Pennell Collections, and Mrs. Lester Cahn, an Art Students' League pupil, was no less liberal. Mr. A. S. Hartrick and Mr. E. J. Sullivan searched their letter files for incidents connected with London days, and Mrs. W. J. Fisher's search was for London photographs. To Mr. John F. Braun, Prof. Georges Sauter, Mr. F. Morley Fletcher, Mr. F. W. Sullivan I am indebted for experiences with and impressions of Pennell and his art. Letters to William Heinemann came from Mr. G. T. Kirby; the John E. D. Trask correspondence from Mr. Alexander Bower; from Mr. David A. Robertson, facts and letters concerning Pennell in Chicago; from Mr. David E. Roberts many services in The Library of Congress; while Mr. R. Emmet Kennedy was ever ready in my hour of need. And throughout I have had the unfailing sympathy and coöperation of Mr. Alfred R. McIntyre, President of Messrs. Little, Brown, and Company, my publishers. He has done everything within his power to make "The Life and Letters" a worthy companion volume to "The Adventures of an Illustrator." In a word, no more eloquent tribute to Joseph Pennell could be paid than the enthusiasm with which so many of his friends and admirers have been willing to work with and for me.

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL

449 Park Avenue
New York City

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THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOSEPH PENNELL

VOLUME ONE

CHAPTER I

A LONG LINE OF QUAKER ANCESTRY · BIRTH · CHILDHOOD (1857–1870)

Joseph Pennell liked to boast that he was a real American and, with equal reason and pride, he might have added a real Friend. On neither his father's nor his mother's side was there a flaw, an interruption in his Quaker ancestry. He was the first Pennell, the first Barton to be married out of Meeting since there had been a Meeting to be married in.

His father, Larkin Pennell, came down in a direct line from Robert Pennell of Balderton in Nottinghamshire, who, duly baptized as an infant in the Church of England, as a man when he heard of the doctrines of George Fox "was convinced of the truth", joined the Society of Friends, and in the year 1684, on the third day of the fifth month, obtained a Certificate of Removal from Fulbeck Monthly Meeting, and within the next two years had sailed for Pennsylvania. He settled in Chester—now Delaware—County, bought land, and was promptly appointed constable for the township—evidently a man of means and importance. At home in Balderton he could, if so minded, have traced his family back to the early sixteenth century, baptism, marriage and burial of its members all being duly recorded in the parish archives. Also in these archives are sixteenth and seventeenth cen-

tury wills of various Pennells, so well-to-do that, after giving their souls into the Hands of Almighty God, their bodies to be decently buried in the churchyard of Balderton or South Searle, and knowing that provision by settlement had been made for the oldest son, still had land and possessions to bequeath to wife and other children, shillings for "The poore man's box", and brass pot, pan and bed to bestow upon a faithful servant.

Two Pennells besides Robert followed or accompanied William Penn in those early years. Henry, his brother, whose name appears in the same Certificate of Removal, was, no doubt, one of "the fools of cave men", in Pennell's words, who preferred Philadelphia and the cliffs on the banks of the Delaware, but who, having "got acres somewhere down town in exchange for their caves, then sold, swapped or were swindled out of them and went on to Delaware County and also dried up—though every one all around became millionaires."

John Pennell, a cousin or nephew of Robert's, established himself first at Derby, afterwards at East Caln, and married Mary Morgan from Radnorshire, Wales: Mary Pennell, the famous minister. She was only thirteen when, at a meeting where Friends "were sitting in awful silence with tears dropping down the cheeks of divers", she was visited by the truth and, coming to Pennsylvania three years later and marrying John Pennell, she could not resist a weighty exercise to appear in public ministry and, her gift increasing, she "had in time a refreshing edifying testimony." Other Pennells were ministers and Overseers of Meeting. Ann, daughter of Robert, married Benjamin Mendenhall, and their son

Moses was a minister with a wide reputation for his seasonable and refreshing testimony. A granddaughter of the same Robert became the wife of Cadwalader Evans, well-known for his "gift in the ministry" and "notable for his benevolence of heart which endeared him not only to the household of faith, but also to the profligate and vain; rendering him serviceable in composing differences."

Through his grandmother, who was a Larkin, there flowed in Joseph Pennell's veins the blood of John Salkeld, Irish blood, and to this branch of his family he may have owed the strength of his inward conviction and his fearlessness of speech. John was a travelling minister zealously concerned for the maintenance of good order in Meeting and vigorous in enforcing it. Once at a Meeting in a country town where Friends were long silent because they slept, his wrath knew no bounds. "Fire! Fire!" he cried suddenly in loud and strident tones. "Where, Where," asked a startled sleeper, waking, "In Hell," John thundered, "to burn up the drowsy and unconcerned."

This is something in the manner of Joseph Pennell's treatment of his public when it showed indifference to the truth he preached. With John Salkeld alone among his ancestors does he seem to have had anything in common. Otherwise, Salkelds, Pennells, Larkins, and the rest made little stir in the world but were God-fearing, law-abiding people, content, like their English forefathers, to leave the chief record of their lives in the parish register. Through marriage they were related to many families who figure prominently in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania records. Taylor, Sharpless, Garrett,

Lloyd, Mercer, Worrall, Maris, Welsh are among the names that adorn the family tree.

Joseph Pennell's mother was Rebecca A. Barton and the Bartons could claim a Quaker ancestry as old and unbroken as the Pennells. The first of the name to emigrate from England was Thomas Barton who arrived in 1680, a few years before Robert Pennell, and settled in New Jersey. He came from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and was associated with the most interesting of all the early Quaker groups—that little group to whom Chalfont St. Giles, Chalfont St. Peters and Jordan's owe their fame in Quaker annals. I am not sure that he knew the Penns and Penningtons, but he took part in the business of the meetings held at Hunger Hill, house of that Thomas Ellwood who was Milton's secretary at Chalfont St. Giles and who lies buried with Penn and his family in the peaceful green Buckinghamshire graveyard. Thomas Barton, when he arrived in his new country, found John Borton already established, having three years before brought his family from Aynho in Northamptonshire with a Certificate of Removal testifying that they "have walked honestly" and "are bound for the Isle called New Jersey." Thomas Barton married Ann, John's daughter, and their children and their children's children married good Friends in Meeting and brought as an inheritance to Joseph Pennell the sound Quaker names of Butcher—the first sailed in the ship *Samuel* in 1682—Stokes, Walmsley, Comly, Evans, Collins, among them many ministers and witnesses of the truth.

William Pennell, Robert's great, great grandfather called himself "husbandman" in his will dated 1567. Robert's descendants, who stayed on in Delaware County

near Marcus Hook, kept up the family traditions and were farmers. Larkin Pennell was the only one of his generation to break away. He was educated at the Westtown Friends' Boarding School and then remained as teacher, not seeing any future on the Pennell farm, which was managed by his brother Nathan. Presently a better chance offered itself in Philadelphia and for years he held an excellent position in the Cope Brothers' shipping office. On Seventh Month, fourth, 1855, he married Rebecca A. Barton by Friends' ceremony in the old Orange Street Meetinghouse at the southwest corner of Washington Square, where the Farm Journal Building now stands. He had waited for her long and patiently. She seems never to have been strong and at the time of their engagement a lingering illness kept her at Byberry, the near township, where her branch of the Bartons had lived since they intermarried with the Walmsleys. Larkin Pennell wrote her frequent letters, strangely unemotional reports of affairs in Meeting, deaths and marriages, of his occasional little journeys at holiday time. Never did he betray any stronger feeling, than when—in such quiet letters it seems quite desperate—he tells her he longs for the day when they can sit together at their own fireside. By 1857 that fireside was in a characteristic little two-story Philadelphia house—red brick, white shutters, white marble steps—in South Ninth Street, Number 183 changed to Number 603, near Shippen, and there, on the Fourth of July, Joseph Pennell was born. He himself was in doubt as to the exact date of his birth. It was registered in the Orange Street Meetinghouse, for he was a birthright member, and the Meetinghouse was burnt down long before he began to

write his "Adventures of an Illustrator." At home his birthday and his country's had been celebrated together and he therefore felt justified in continuing to celebrate his on the Fourth of July, while 1860, judging from his earliest adventures, he thought must be the year. What he did not know was that the Orange Street Meeting had been merged with the Fourth and Arch Streets Meeting and that to this older Meetinghouse, before the fire, all records had been removed from Orange Street, among them the birth record of Joseph Pennell. This gives the date 7–4–1857 which, in looking through old family papers, I found confirmed in a letter from Larkin Pennell to "My dear Sister", dated Seventh Month, fifth, 1857: "I am glad to inform you that Rebecca has a nice little babe, a son, and both are comfortable and doing well. It took place yesterday about 3 o'clock, P.M., so that we have again celebrated the fourth." And further on: "He can hollow and make a big noise already, yet he sleeps most of the time." Babies have a way of "hollowing" and asserting themselves with vigour, but in this case it strikes one as prophetic of the man who never hesitated to speak so he could be heard when he, like John Salkeld, was "under a weighty exercise" to declare the truth that was in him. Three days later, Seventh Month, seventh, there was another letter, this one short: "We have named him Joseph after my father."

The next year either the number of the house was again changed, or the family moved to Number 605, the twin of Number 603, the same red brick, the same white shutters, the same white marble steps. The neighbourhood, which like all Philadelphia has grown rather the worse for wear, was then highly correct and respectable.

HOUSE IN SOUTH NINTH STREET WHERE
JOSEPH PENNELL WAS BORN

Photograph by P. B. Wallace

Correct and respectable Philadelphians lived in these little two-story brick houses which now are mostly shops. John Drew was born in one close by, Frank Stockton lived in another. Correct and respectable Philadelphians were buried in the little Ronaldson's Cemetery, a block below, which also has dramatic associations for members of Joseph Jefferson's family lie there forgotten. In 1861 Larkin Pennell had put by enough money to invest in a house, Number 819 Lombard Street. It was just around the corner, a three-story instead of a two-story house—this was all the difference.

Larkin Pennell, as I knew him in the Eighties, was a sad, silent man. Rebecca Pennell died before my marriage and I never saw her, nor could I ever get the impression of the woman she was from Joseph. He rarely spoke of her, though he could not say enough of the sympathetic, practical help his father gave him when he was young. All the same, father and son were as the poles apart. The father's strange silence distressed the son, who wrote to me in the early years of our friendship: "It has always been so, even though all my life his kindness has been without end for if it hadent been for him I never would have been where I am—but talk he never would." They could have understood each other little at the start, they understood each other less with the passing of the years. In my recollections, the father spoke as seldom as possible to the son and the son resented what he thought a lack of confidence. The relations, no doubt, were strained from the beginning. It could not have been a cheerful or inspiring house for a boy to grow up in, especially as there were no other children. I have often wondered how the artist in Joseph Pennell, how his fine

adventurous spirit and inextinguishable ambition survived his infancy and boyhood. On the other hand, he did not make things easy for the parents who must many times have looked with amazement and misgiving bordering on fear at the strange child, so unlike them, whom they had brought into the world.

Fortunately, the child did not realize the sadness and unchildlike quiet of his lonely life. When he grew up his memories of these early years were tinged with beauty and full of charm. His Great-aunt Beulah Barton, whom he loved to the end, had a house close by in Tenth Street which she shared with his aunt Mary Barton. Other Bartons were not far away on Fourth Street near Pine. In Union Street were Evans cousins to whom his visits were welcome. Many other Friends lived in the neighbourhood, filling it with the peace of their peaceful ways. He looked back to a town of stately or simple brick houses, like his own, each with its green and fragrant back yard and its tree-lined street in front, cool and shady in the summer time. From the Lombard Street back windows, through the tunnel made by the narrow side yards of the Pine Street houses, he could see the statue of Penn in front of the Pennsylvania Hospital. On his visits to Union and Fourth Streets, still a little old eighteenth-century quarter, he could hear the chimes of near-by St. Peter's. And so, in the very beginning, he got to know Penn's Philadelphia and to feel for it the deep affection that strengthened with time. Inside the houses, as he remembered, his aunts and cousins and neighbours, in grey or brown silk gowns, white muslin caps, soft white fichus, grey or white silk shawls, were always sitting at their needle

HOUSE IN LOMBARD STREET WHERE JOSEPH PENNELL LIVED AS A CHILD

Photograph by P. B. Wallace

work or knitting in white-walled rooms full of old Sheraton and Chippendale. These tranquil women, leading a life so unlike that of the "world's people", were kind in their fashion to the lonely child. There was an Annie Wallace, whom he could never forget because she was the first to read Grimm and Hawthorne to him, before his father, helped by his mother, taught him to read. Hannah and Elizabeth Evans, the Union Street cousins, entertained him with the once popular Rollo books, little suspecting the thrills these readings sent through their small guest, as he said afterwards, "making a restless rover of him." And at all these houses, as at home, as at Meeting, there was the reading of the Scriptures from which he gained his appreciation of good English.

The child fell the more readily into the family's quiet ways because he was without the robust health of the average boy. As if this were not enough, many ills befell him. He broke his right arm—and remained left-handed forever after; out sledding, he broke his nose which bore the marks of it throughout his life; he was stunned by lightning, with the result that his nerves went all to pieces and he would jump at the sound of thunder or the shrill old Philadelphia street cries, now no longer heard. At one time he went half blind and was kept in a darkened room for months. He almost hung himself with rings and ropes for exercise on the back verandah. And he was so thin the boys called him "Skinny Pennell." Worse, he was sensitive, shy, reticent. When he suffered, it was in silence. Once, for months and months, he dreamed the same dreadful dream every night, so that he went to bed already terrified, trembling. Always, he

found himself forced to go on an errand downstairs to the cellar where, in one corner, stood a great brazen statue. And the statue would begin to rock backwards and forwards, each time bending lower and lower, coming nearer and nearer, at last so near it would have fallen upon him had he not wakened in an agony, screaming. His father and mother must surely sometimes have heard the screams, must have seen signs of the nervous exhaustion following this nightly terror. But, either because they suspected nothing, or else for discipline's sake, they let him bear his suffering and overcome it as best he could without their aid.

I do not think he was an unhappy child. From the start he was sufficient unto himself, happiest when no one shared his games, finding his own amusements, inventing stories, making drawings to illustrate them. I have sheets of these early drawings, in pencil, in water colour, in coloured chalks, on odd scraps of paper, bits of old letters, envelopes, books of unused cheques his father brought home—on anything he could find. He had also the child's usual toys—a rocking horse, balloons that burst, hammers and nails to hurt his fingers with, floating ducks and boats to mess about with in his mother's basin or the bathtub, lots of tin soldiers. Soldiers were the heroes of his stories—infantry, cavalry, artillery, at drill, on the march, bivouacking, on the battle field, the Stars and Stripes everywhere proudly waving. Peace was preached in the family circle and at the Meetinghouse, but probably never was a small Quaker boy so engrossed with war. The greater number of early drawings in my possession are of war. And it is amazing how full of character, life, movement they are.

DAGUERREOTYPE OF JOSEPH PENNELL

About the age of three

Soldiers march, horses prance. That they are the work of a child is unmistakable. He was not the infant phenomenon picked up in the schools or on the roadside by patrons of art who patronize and praise until promise vanishes like smoke. But an enthusiasm for his subject and a power of observation that were Joseph Pennell's through his working life are unmistakable in these childish illustrations of childish war stories.

When he had playmates he preferred girls who were gentler, more considerate, without the brute strength of the average boy against which he had not the physical force to hold his own. This did not prevent his joining in boys' games. The little Wanamakers next door in Lombard Street were playmates, and also the Maris boys in Pine Street, and with them and many besides he had great sport, embarking on much mischief, getting into many scrapes. At the Copes' office, where he spent hours with his father, he had occasionally the Cope children for companions, but then the amusement was as decorous as the office. Anyway, his chief delight was in the life and movement of the office, the sea captains wandering in and out, the models of boats brought down as a rare treat for him to go adventuring with, the bewildering panorama of Delaware Avenue out of the windows, the docks, the ships with fine-sounding names—the *Tuscarora*, the *Tonawanda*, the *Saranac*, the *Wyoming*, which he drew, and any number of the drawings are in the old cheque book. It would be a mistake to form an impression of him as a poor little "misunderstood", that odious little prig far too long the favorite hero of tales for the young. But because he was not over strong, because he met with many accidents and had more

than most children's share of illness, because he was sensitive to an unusual degree, he was inevitably happiest when nobody was about to disturb or bully him.

Another pleasure was the occasional visit to Uncle Nathan, where he had the big farm to roam over, the tall grass of the fields to play in, new and marvellous tales to make up about the curious living things he found and, once, an excitement never to be forgotten. For, wandering through the tall grass one day, he heard the firing of guns, and the next thing he was hurrying with his father and mother, bag and baggage, back to town, and from the train at Gray's Ferry he saw, high on the banks on either side the tracks, men piling up earthworks and digging rifle pits. And the morning after, at the Pine Street house, when the maid first opened the front door, he at her heels, blood splashed the marble steps—the blood of a wounded soldier or escaped prisoner, no doubt—and he promptly fainted, as he always did, almost to the last, at the sight of blood. And this was the first he knew of the horrors of war. But as the days went on he grew accustomed to seeing prisoners and soldiers in the street, or at least to hearing the family and the neighbours talk of so disheartening a spectacle in Quaker Philadelphia. And on another memorable day his father came home from the drafting office, saying that had he not been over age, they could not have made him go as soldier. The true Quaker is a pacifist in deed as in word.

By this time, probably because the fact that the child was too much alone dawned upon the parents, he was sent to the Select Boys' School in Cherry Street above Eighth, a Friends' school. It was quite a distance for

him to go, but Teacher Susannah House, in charge of the primary class, lived close by and called for him every morning and brought him safely home, clinging to her hand, every afternoon. Of his school he remembered best the misery of Fifth Day morning, when Isaac Morgan marched the boys, two by two, down to Fourth and Arch Street Meeting, where it was hard to keep awake if no one was moved to speak, and big boys would stick pins into a little fellow's legs or the principal would shake him. And the cruel part of it was that, as they marched to and from the Meetinghouse in their coats with the collars cut off at the back, the bad boys of the world's people would jeer at them and cry "Quaker, Quaker, how are thee?"—and this in Penn's own city. They were jeered at the more on Seventh Day and on Twelfth Month, twenty-fifth, when the strictly disciplined attended school though all the world's children were making holiday. Another vivid memory of the school, as of Uncle Nathan's farm, was warlike. Into the quiet of the schoolhouse one morning came a noise of fire-engine bells and shouts of many people, also a something indescribable in the air—and then a sudden, swift stampede of the boys, and he, the smallest, following as fast as his little feet would carry him, seized by Teacher Susannah and dragged ruthlessly home so that this was as near as he came to the rejoicings at the State House over the news of victory from Gettysburg.

CHAPTER II

THE CITY LEFT FOR THE SUBURBS · SCHOOL DAYS (1870–1876)

In 1870 Larkin Pennell got rid of the Lombard Street house, perhaps because as an investment it proved not so promising as he hoped, but, more likely, for the sake of the boy's health. Whatever the reason, the decision was wise, for the new move was to Germantown, an open green suburb in the Seventies. A house was bought in Fisher's Lane where all around was real country for the boy to play in. There were woods—the Wister woods—for adventure; there were creeks to explore—the Wissahickon, the Wingohocking, the Cresheim, the Perkiomen, names full of memories for the Philadelphian; there were hills to coast in winter and ponds for skating. Germantown Road was still mostly an old-fashioned country turnpike, shaded by great trees and lined by old grey stone houses, many dating back to Revolutionary days. Of the more modern Germantown architecture in the more modern lanes and streets, the less said the better. The Colonial revival was years ahead and the brown-stone, jig-saw period was in its prime. However, gardens were everywhere and the air was fresh. Joseph Pennell profited by the change. He was never robust, but from this time on he was less often ill, while his accidents fortunately were fewer.

He had not lost his talent for amusing himself. True, he made friends, had a special chum in John Henry who lived next door, belonged to cricket clubs—Philadelphia the one American town to prefer cricket to baseball—was on terms with "the gang", for wherever there are boys, there is a gang. With them he played Red Indians in the woods, he indulged in the schoolboy's practical jokes, did all the absurd, unbearable, horrid things that boys will do—and would not be boys if they did not. He was game, he never shirked his part, but he continued to prefer the companionship of girls, and to care most for the amusements in which no one shared.

On his tramps alone he drew the old houses, already able to appreciate the fine Germantown mansions like Stenton; he drew the old mills, the Megargee and Rittenhouse paper mills, already responsive to their picturesque appeal; he drew the woods and streams. Untrained, untaught, he knew the right things, seeing beauty in the beautiful. "Once," he wrote in "The Adventures", "I went away up Germantown Avenue to Cresheim Creek, winding then through open fields, till I came to the glen and then the gorge which carries it to the Wissahickon. It was so beautiful that I sat down, all alone, and cried for the beauty of it. And then I tried to draw it." In this incident you see Joseph Pennell, the illustrator, as he was through life. I, who later went on so many of his journeys with him, know how, when he came to the place where he was to work, there was the long wandering in search of his subject; when he found it, the pleasure that is akin to pain in its beauty; and then the oblivion to everything save the endeavour to express its beauty in terms of art.

In the years before standardized education for everybody was invented, a boy so preoccupied with drawing would have been apprenticed to an artist, received a practical training in a practical studio—a workshop—and left to pick up as best he could whatever further education he felt was needed. In the Eighteen-seventies progress had long since begun the levelling down to one standard. Pennell's parents would have reproached themselves, and been reproached by their neighbours, had they not given him, as far as their means permitted, the schooling considered necessary for all boys, and had they not, as they were Friends, sent him to a Friends' school. They thought first of Westtown where Larkin Pennell and Martha Barton had been teachers. A Pennell cousin was among the pupils, also friends, one of whom, whose letters, from no merit of their own, have survived, wrote urging him to try it for a term; it would be a first-rate thing, examinations were fine and exciting. This amuses me, because to Joseph Pennell examinations were anathema; he never could see any use in them, and instinctively he felt that at Westtown he would be the right boy in the wrong place. Later in life he was convinced that the herding—his word—of boys or girls in boarding schools destroyed individuality and killed independent thought. Germantown Friends' Select School was finally chosen, a day school from which the late afternoon and evening brought escape and some leisure for the only work Pennell ever wanted to do.

In this school his pleasure was small. He quickly discovered that with many of his schoolmates money counted. They were children of rich parents, Friends as a rule being not merely good Christians but excellent

MAIN STREET, GERMANTOWN

Lithograph by Joseph Pennell

men of business. In Pennsylvania and New Jersey few Friends could trace their ancestors farther back than the Pennells and the Bartons. But the Pennells made no fortune out of farming. Rebecca Barton's father, who at one time "drove his carriage and pair", sure sign of wealth in Quaker Philadelphia, lost his money in her early youth. Joseph Pennell, always sensitive, was made to feel the difference acutely.

His teachers, with few exceptions, were not sympathetic. The principal had a trick of sneering that hurt. The attitude of the others was one of disapproval, hard for a child to bear. His use of his left hand annoyed them, they irritated him by trying to force him to use his right. He was always drawing, often when he ought to have been studying. His pockets were crammed full of pencils. When the teacher pounced upon one, another replaced it. His drawing was treated as insubordination or a childish failing to be scolded or laughed out of him. An exception was Teacher Susanna Kite—Teacher Sue—for whom his affection never wavered. But even Teacher Sue did not understand. She would pass behind his desk to see what kept him so busy. If the drawing, for of course he was drawing, was on his slate, she would rub it out. If on paper, she would write underneath: "Satan always finds something for idle hands to do." According to school discipline, he was in the wrong not to study his lessons during the lesson hour, but it is curious that his absorption in drawing never struck his teachers as anything better than idleness—until his reputation was made.

A drawing class had just been started, an innovation. With the drawing teachers he was more industrious and amenable for they taught him the one thing he was eager

to learn. Drawing teachers in day schools are not apt to be eminent artists or inspiring masters. Three in the Germantown school were above the average. One was W. H. Goodyear, eventually student of Gothic perspective and curator in the Brooklyn Museum. He lectured on art when practical lessons were what one at least of his pupils wanted. To James R. Lambdin, who succeeded him, this pupil was always grateful. Lambdin was a painter of some repute in Philadelphia during his lifetime, and for one thing he should be remembered. Whether or no he studied in Paris under De Boisbaudran, I cannot say, but, like the great French master, he insisted on the necessity to the artist of a trained memory. De Boisbaudran would bid his students, whether in town or country, by day or by night, look at a selected subject until they had memorized it, take no notes or memoranda, and afterwards in the studio put down what they could remember upon paper or canvas. In like fashion Lambdin taught the student to use eyes, brain and memory, a sound foundation for an illustrator. Another of his merits as a teacher was his genuine interest in his students. He showed it one year by offering a prize for the best drawing brought back from the summer holidays. When Pennell's careful study of an ugly house across the street was chosen instead of a rich rival's drawing of the Yosemite, and the prize, a silver crayon holder in a leather case, was placed in his hands, he was stunned. He has described how he sat in the schoolroom, bewildered, staring at it, while the class trooped out into the school yard and said unkind things, and when he joined them let him know how they felt about it,—a heavy price to pay for his first success.

After Lambdin came Joseph Ropes, long since forgotten, though he is mentioned in Tuckerman. He was original neither in his teaching nor in his work which was mannered, a fact he apparently realized. Up at North Conway, New Hampshire, one summer, he wrote to his pupil an eloquent sermon on the need of close contact with Nature to save the artist from mannerisms. But he kept on falling into them himself and they were inevitably appropriated by the pupil. When Pennell took drawings done under Ropes' influence to Peter Moran for an opinion, Moran growled that he had never seen drawings so mannered made by one so young. Ropes' sole recommendation was his enthusiasm and to Pennell it meant a great deal to find at last a master to whom enthusiasm was not a crime. Master and student sometimes worked together in the master's studio, the student's father paying for lessons in water colour; sometimes they sketched out of doors. They shared the same subjects and motives, tried the same methods. This experience more than made up for the mannerisms which by the youth were as quickly dropped as borrowed.

So the school years went on. Some regular school work he must have done, despite the pockets full of pencils and the disapproving teachers. He kept up with his class, passed examinations, wrote papers and read them, when the time came graduated with honours, the first boy to graduate in the Germantown Friends' School. This was in 1876, the year of the Centennial. The paintings in the art section suggested his graduation essay and were a good excuse to visit the exhibition often. At the opening ceremonies he chanced upon Abbey and Reinhart drawing for *Harper's*, and to him

they were the most important personages present, not excepting the President. The paintings he chose for his paper he would not have looked at two or three years later, but of paintings he had so far seen next to none.

Pennell afterwards remembered his years at the Germantown School as "six awful years, the worst of my life." No bitterness overshadowed his memories of the quiet Meetinghouse, which was in the school grounds. His pleasure was to recall the peace and stillness as he sat there on First Day morning, "the gold bars of light falling down through the Venetian blinds, listening to the sounds of flies inside and horses outside stamping in the sheds in summer, or to the roar of the winds round the houses in winter and the crackle of logs in the big stoves—the men on their side with such character, such refinement; the women on their side so beautiful and calm—the whole like a Franz Hals." He resented the innovations and the signs of more to follow that he found on his first visit after years in England. Shortly before his death, in a letter to Mrs. Halsey, an old schoolmate, he told her of this visit to the school where, now he was famous, he had been asked to talk.

I don't think they liked what I said for they never asked me again, though they are always reminding me that I was the first boy to graduate and therefore I should help enlarge the school house—but the letters are written in such a weird lingo—and the school seems to be conducted in such an un-Friendly fashion—that I fear I have no interest in it—and when I went to meeting the last time and found women sitting on the men's side and that the plain language was near forgotten—it so upset me I have never been there since.

He made no pretence at the time that his school days were happy. Pretence of any kind was abhorrent to him. But glad as he was to escape, it seemed a case of jumping from the frying pan into the fire. For he left school to find himself a clerk in a coal company's office.

CHAPTER III

IN A COAL OFFICE BY DAY, AN ART SCHOOL BY NIGHT (1876–1880)

Before the leap into the fire, there was a short interval.

Pennell's plans for the shaping of his life were definite and decided. He never doubted that he was created to be an artist, an illustrator, and his energy was devoted to fulfilling his destiny. That his friends were shocked and his relations unwilling, was natural. The duty of the American youth of his generation, who had not the means to go to college, was to begin at once to make money. In the America of those days art was thought, if thought of at all, a pleasant pastime, never a lucrative occupation. The foreigner, with his old gift of condescension, was apt to scoff at America for not having any art and the facts gave a reason, if no justification, for the reproach. In earlier days, when America had hardly ceased to be England, the architectural standards brought over by the colonists survived and buildings were beautiful. Painters like Gilbert Stuart and Sully inherited the Reynolds-Gainsborough tradition and for a man with money to have himself and his family painted was a duty. To the tradition of the big *machine*—invented long before the name for it—Benjamin West was so faithful an adherent that England lured him away and the Royal Academy claimed him as its presi-

dent. After this, America, left to develop its architecture and painting, gradually rose to the Brown Stone Period in New York, the worse Furness Period in Philadelphia, and gloried in the Hudson River School of painters. Of illustrators before the Seventies, Winslow Homer's is the one distinguished name, and his illustrations of the Civil War might be forgotten but for his reputation as painter. The names of distinguished engravers to reward the patient digger into old records are as few. This was not because Americans were indifferent to art. They simply had no time to think of it, no leisure to spare from the essentials of life for its luxuries. Not until the Centennial which, despite its limitations and the academic tone of its art section, came as a revelation, did Americans realize that art was worth while and that they, almost alone among civilized people, were without it.

Friends had not only no time for art, but no place for it in their scheme of salvation. To them it was a temptation, if not a positive evil. I have before me a letter written to Joseph Pennell, a few years later when he was in Florence, by an Overseer of Meeting, warning him against "those temptations peculiar to thy art . . . . those forbidden fields wherein the art of Europe has corrupted itself . . the many temptations incident to thy present surroundings."

That was the attitude. The world's people in America were free of moral objection to art. They covered their walls with pictures, if they owned any, were pleased to have old family portraits to display, rather felt it a patriotic duty to hang the once familiar engravings of Washington Crossing the Delaware and the Signing

of the Declaration of Independence conspicuously in their dining rooms or front halls. Friends, however, in those old days—they have changed since—were more austere, as "plain" in the decoration of their houses as in their dress. Silhouettes and samplers, daguerreotypes in their somber black frames, or wax flowers and real shells were their main concessions to ornament. If their furniture was beautiful, it was an accident, it had been brought over by their ancestors; and, without their realizing it, the simplicity of their walls made more for beauty than rooms full of indifferent paintings and worse engravings. Clearly, little in the period, nothing in the community he was brought up in, no beauty save the beauty of simplicity, could account for Joseph Pennell's determination to make an illustrator of himself.

That summer of 1876 must have been an anxious one in the Pennell household and, between the parents, I do not doubt, the consultations were many. I can almost hear the aunts' and great-aunts' reproaches to the youth: "At thy age does thee not think thee is old enough to earn money and help thy father and mother?" But the youth wanted his time for the study and practice impossible during his school years. He could repay his family in the years to come, as he did, lavishly, providing comforts and luxuries for his father and Aunt Martha, his mother not living to see the full measure of his triumph. His pockets at first were not empty. A wild speculation in Cochin China fowls and their eggs brought him enough money to invest in a few casts of hands and feet, in occasional books and magazines, his choice of these unexpected in a youth of such limited

opportunities. Among his first purchases were Ruskin's "Modern Painters," Hamerton's "Intellectual Life," Gilchrist's "Blake." He could keep himself in pencils, pens, inks, chalks, paper, which it must, in justice, be said his father had never denied him. Through the summer of 1876, in a hot upstairs room under the roof, he drew from the casts, carried out the sketches brought home from long prowls, studied the illustrators whose work most appealed to him, and, after the usual summer holiday in Atlantic City, made what he called "imaginative marines" in pen and ink. Sometimes, hoping a short cut would land him in the pages where he longed to be, he ran to a fire on the chance of a newspaper accepting his drawings, offered comic cartoons to *Harper's Weekly*, posed as "special artist" of the *Daily Graphic* only to find the real "special" on the spot before him. He was indefatigable.

His immediate end was admission into the Pennsylvania Academy School. He could go no farther than Philadelphia in search of a school, tuition there was free, and it was probably as good as any other in the country. For the country, having no art, naturally had no art schools of the least pretension, perhaps not an unmitigated evil. Students went abroad for their training. William Morris Hunt and La Farge studied in Paris. In the spring of the Centennial year, a landmark in the history of American art, Chase, Duveneck, Twachtman, McLure Hamilton, Muhrman, back from Munich and Antwerp schools, exhibited in the Pennsylvania Academy: the first group of American artists, though foreign-trained, to lay the foundation of whatever we have in the way of American art to-day.

Pennell submitted his summer's work and after months of waiting was requested to send for it. He was rejected, and again when he tried his luck at the first exhibition in the Academy's new building, that masterpiece of the Furness Period which still stands at the corner of Broad and Cherry Streets. He could not live indefinitely on his parents, who, if they said nothing, he knew were ashamed of having to keep a grown-up son. Various schemes were suggested. A furniture factory, an architect's office, the J. B. Lippincott publishing house, a modest beginning in each. A more desirable chance seemed a post as designer in Dobson's carpet mills. His credentials were his drawings of flowers—geraniums, goldenrod, dogwood, the geraniums already approved by William T. Richards, the marine painter and a Germantown neighbour. Dobson's did not approve, so there was an end of that. Nothing else offered itself except a clerkship in the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company's office and, despairing, he accepted it and settled down to his distasteful duties as clerk.

He was conscientious. He abhorred clerical work, but he did it to the best of his ability. He gave his employers a fair return for his salary—seven dollars a week to start with—and refused to allow the office to exhaust his energy or stifle his ambition. To the Pennsylvania School of Industrial Art, an outcome of the Centennial, which had just opened, he submitted the pen and chalk drawings, the studies of casts and marines rejected by the Academy. The new school saw something in them. He was entered as a student. And now, he said, his life began. The only classes he could attend were in the

evening. From seven in the morning until six in the afternoon, he was on his high stool at his desk. At six in the afternoon he rushed home, bolted his supper, and was off to the school in an old tumbled-down building at Broad and Race Streets. The chicken money had long since been used up, seven dollars did not go far. Sometimes he was without enough for his carfare both ways. On those evenings he walked the miles from Fisher's Lane, at a good pace too, for the night session began at seven-thirty.

He had no use for "genius work", as it is known in the studios. He believed in the genius of industry. Like all artists who have succeeded, he worked unceasingly. In the office when business was slack, the foreman, with a curious likeness to Lincoln, would pose for him. He sketched everything in sight, usually on brown paper in black and white, the Ropes manner, though chalk was at times exchanged for paint. He etched on glass, inspired by Ropes, who showed him an etching of Tivoli done in this way, and one experiment, with Stenton as subject, led to his "first published appearance" and his friendship with C. Colin Cooper, the painter. Cooper and his brother were issuing the very youthful *Germantown Social* and seeing the "Stenton" in a photographer's window, commissioned an illustration, for which the artist was paid in glory. Of this print, I can find no trace. The subject of his first copper plate was an old mill near Wister's Dam, but, to my knowledge, no print of it remains. He drew his beautiful old Great-aunt Beulah and the other aunts in their Quaker dress. During a summer vacation at Dingman's Ferry or Downingtown or Richfield Springs, or Atlantic

City, with the entire day at his disposal, his work was his recreation. At Downingtown he made his first lithograph, the "Bridge near Downingtown," drawn with pen and lithographic ink on zinc, Ropes outgrown, early English lithographers the new influence. At Downingtown also he made his first sale, a sketch of rocks on a near hillside for which Friend Jane E. Mason—her name deserves to go down—paid him one dollar. Sometimes his father took him to Tamaqua, Mahanoy City, Mauch Chunk in the Pennsylvania coal region, and the "Wonder of Work" fascinated him as it was to keep on fascinating him throughout his life.

With one professor at the school he was immediately in sympathy: Charles Marquedant Burns, an architect of distinction, most of whose work was done in or near Philadelphia. Therefore Philadelphia failed to appreciate him. Burns was decided in his convictions, fearless and emphatic in expressing them. His wit was keen, his outlook upon life humourous, not a popular combination, though for students who could face his outspoken criticism, he was the best of masters. Pennell made friends among the students, the friendship lasting through life with H. F. Stratton, in his turn a master at the school, and G. Dinsmore Gideon, who exchanged art for publishing. They and other students, who were in earnest and formed a class within the class, wandered all over town in search of subjects to sketch, the coal clerk somehow managing to get days off to go along. On Sunday, they would have a model or carry their sketch books down by the river. They drew illustrations, one of the group suggesting the subject each week. Mr. Stratton remembers that Pennell's first

THE WRECK OF THE NANCY BELL

Weekly subject set by the Class within his Class at the Pennsylvania School of Industrial Art

etching, on glass, of "Dingman's Ferry" was shown at the Academy, the year 1879. It was banished to the top line in the little North-east Room. "Never mind", said Pennell, "my things will be hung lower next year." "And", Mr. Stratton adds, "they were."

About this period it was Pennell's good fortune to run across young Gerome Ferris, through whom he got to know Stephen Ferris the father, an important factor in Pennell's development. Ferris helped to found the New York Etching Club and the Philadelphia Society of Etchers. He was an accomplished technician, and always willing to admit intelligent students into the studio and let them watch him at work. It was he who inspired Pennell to substitute copper for glass, and he was also responsible for the first phase of Pennell's style as illustrator. He had discovered modern Spanish art, been thrilled by the discovery, owned Fortuny etchings, reproductions of Rico, Casanova, Fabrès, though, curiously, seems to have known nothing of Vierge. It was a pleasure to show prints to so responsive a youth and to take him to see the paintings by Fortuny and Rico in the Gibson and Johnson collections. Pennell had spent hours with the English illustrators of the Sixties, and the French illustrators of the Thirties, but their appeal was not then so irresistible as the Spaniards'. From them he appropriated what he could, for never yet was there an artist in any medium who was not indebted to some earlier master—who did not at one time or another play the sedulous ape. Through Ferris, the Spanish was the strongest influence revealed not merely in Pennell's early drawings but in American illustration at its best. Blum, Brennan and Lungren,

who had studied in the Pennsylvania Academy, also met Ferris, were invited to his studio, and profited by their visits. For some years the pages of the *Century* were brilliant with their work, for brilliancy in technique and effects both was the chief characteristic of their accepted masters.

Had Burns been the only professor at the Industrial Art School, all would have been clear sailing. Pennell objected to some of the others for teaching "too much mechanical and too little industrial art", and he stayed away from their classes. His fellow students began to follow suit, he was unwittingly inciting rebellion, and, worse offence, when the secretary wrote asking an excuse for his non-attendance, he neglected to answer. After a reasonable interval a second letter from the secretary, dated November 27, 1879, informed him that "his name was stricken from the roll of scholars." The note was polite, the secretary signed himself "Yours Respectfully", but it meant expulsion. Burns, a true friend, promptly induced the Academy authorities to look again at Pennell's drawings. This time he was not rejected, and at last convinced that earning a salary by selling coal was a sheer waste of his talent, he threw business to the winds and settled down to hard work in the Academy School.

It was a blow to his family who fancied him established and too old not to realize the risk of deserting a settled job for art. Gloom once more fell upon the household in Fisher's Lane and the aunts he loved to draw did not conceal their displeasure. His decision was discussed at Meeting. But Friends' discipline was less rigid than of old. The younger generation was growing

impatient of restraint, concessions were called for. It was convenient to remember that West was an artist, though a Friend; that Howard Pyle, W. T. Smedley, Mary Halleck Foote, all Friends, were prospering as illustrators. Joseph Pennell was not dismissed from Germantown Meeting, of which he remained a member until his death. Hardly had he left the office before, as if in justification of his new adventure, he received his first serious commission—Friend Jane E. Mason's dollar commission could not be called serious. Nor could one from Great-aunt Amy who, as early as 1876, hearing he was "almost perfect in drawing", asked him to draw her "picture with her bonnet on and also without it" for the "real fun" it would be for her. The next year an unknown Harriet Thomas gave him five dollars for four drawings of a coat of arms. In 1879 Cousin Hannah Evans, of the Rollo books, offered the same sum for one drawing of the old Union Street house. But after reading her four pages of minute instructions as to point of view, proportions, size, prominence to the date 1788 high on the water pipe, he must have thought it not worth the money. The new commission was another matter. It came unsolicited from Doctor Wister, who wanted two drawings of the beautiful old Wister house in Germantown Road and would pay ten dollars for each. The drawings finished and submitted, the doctor suggested more grass in the foreground, more shadows under the trees, but, otherwise, was "quite satisfied", and great was the amazement of Pennell's family and friends to find that he could earn more from art in two days than in two weeks from business.

At the Academy he started in the night Antique

Class, which was in charge of the type of master who dispenses criticism with a sneer. To Burns' slashing criticism Pennell never objected. It was just and, if sometimes drastic, always stimulating. For him, ultra-sensitive, a sneer was no stimulant. He shrank from it, escaped by absenting himself from the classroom at the hour of the master's visit, and presently, as his time was at last entirely his own, joined the day Antique Class under one of the best professors who ever taught at the Academy. Thomas Eakins was interested in him and soon promoted him to the Life Class. Eakins did not sneer but he could be brutal. Pennell was determined to work in his own way for the end he had set himself. He did the unheard of and drew the model on a large scale in pen and ink. Eakins was indignant, would not stand that sort of originality and said so brutally. Had he suspected how acutely the sensitive student suffered under the lash of his tongue, he might have been gentler. As it was, the student once more dispensed with the master's criticism. He gave Eakins no chance to be brutal again, a mistake he regretted as the years went on. It could not be said of him, as of Sargent, that he had nothing to unlearn—he had everything, was his lament in moments of despair.

His attendance grew less regular until it soon ceased altogether. His months of study taught him at least that art knows no short cut, no primrose path, that technique cannot be mastered save by diligent application, and it was good for him just to breathe the atmosphere of the Academy, to make friends with artists, to talk of the things he cared for with those who also cared. Among his fellow students were Thomas

THE KNAVE OF HEARTS

Weekly subject set by the Class within his Class at the Pennsylvania School of Industrial Art

Anshutz who was to succeed Eakins; A. B. Frost and Henry McCarter, the illustrators; J. J. Boyle, the sculptor; Frederick Waugh, Harry Poore, Charles Fromuth, Albert Rosenthal, the painters; Robert G. Leinroth who, as art manager of the Ketterlinus Lithographic Company, was eventually to prove practically his sympathy and friendship. Pennell got out of the Academy not all it might have given had he been less sensitive, but enough to repay him, even if he did deprive himself of the criticism supposed to be the chief advantage of study in an art school. Had he not won recognition and success as an illustrator in an extraordinarily short time, he might have persevered longer. But when commissions quickly multiplied for the work it was his ambition to do, he left the Academy and took a studio in the Presbyterian Board of Publication Building, Number 1334 Chestnut Street, sharing it with his friend Harry Poore and having for neighbours Cecilia Beaux and Stephen Parrish. By the end of 1880 he was well launched.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST COMMISSION FROM THE *CENTURY*· THE BEGINNING OF OUR WORK TOGETHER (1880–1882)

If Joseph Pennell did not grow famous over night, he came very near it. In less than two years after his reckless shaking of business from off his feet, his drawings were appearing in *Scribner's Magazine* and, sure sign of success in the eyes of his family, he was making a good income.

He deserved to succeed. No one ever worked harder to achieve the end he set himself. He was never so foolish as to do nothing but work. All work and no play seldom hurries the ambitious man to his goal. During the winter he disposed of his surplus energy in skating, a sport of which he could not have enough, and he was a good skater, a master of the fantastic twirls and grapevines and fancy figures then in vogue. During the other seasons his spare hours were given to cycling, in which his joy was as keen. He rode the tall bicycle, the only bicycle to ride in his young days, and he saved up enough money to buy one during his first year at the Industrial Art School. He dipped deep into the politics of cycling, was among the earliest members of the League of American Wheelmen, prominent in the Germantown Bicycle Club, at one time its secretary, a post that was no sinecure. For this was the period of great cycling meets, big cycling dinners, amazing cycling

parades, the cyclers all in no less amazing uniforms, with captains and sub-captains and a fine array of officers of many ranks. The secretarial correspondence was enormous and enough has survived to make me marvel how this particular secretary, busy about so many other things, managed to attend to it, to keep the innumerable details in order, to bring off the meets and parades and dinners when they were held in Philadelphia. The history of the development of the sport is in this correspondence.

He was as "deadly afraid of girls" as ever and yet continued to prefer their company, skating and, when the tricycle was invented, cycling with them. As soon as he had money to spend, he took them to the theater, the opera, to lectures of visiting celebrities. Amusements were not lacking.

These sports and recreations touched his life with the much-needed gaiety not to be had at home, but the crowning pleasure never ceased to be work. With that nothing could interfere. He never wavered in his determination to become an illustrator nor in his belief in his own ability. He was too wise to expect publishers to come hunting an unknown beginner in Fisher's Lane. It was the beginner's business to go hunting the publisher. He had the advantage of starting on his hunt at the dawn of the great age of American illustration: "The Golden Age of Illustration in America", critics begin to call it, borrowing the name from the Sixties in England. America had not waited all this time for illustrated books and magazines and papers, but it was forced to take what was given it which, at the best, was pretty bad. Illustrated magazines had prospered,

above all in Philadelphia, the home of the popular *Godey's*. *Harper's Monthly* already had a past, and *Harper's* was not the only illustrated weekly. America could boast even an illustrated daily, the *Graphic*. But illustration, as far as these publications are concerned, might be forgotten without much loss. Here and there one stumbles upon something above the average—the charm of Godey's colored fashion plates, for instance. On the whole, however, going through the old files is a dreary business. The awakening of American illustration from the slough of the second-rate came in the late Seventies with the awakening of American painting. Artists were appearing among the illustrators of the younger generation—Abbey, Pyle, Rogers, Reinhart in *Harper's;* Farney, Blum, Brennan, Lungren in *Scribner's;*—when Joseph Pennell, his portfolio under his arm, began his siege of the publishers' offices.

The artists would have been helpless without engravers who could do them justice. But, as if by miracle, a group of younger wood engravers seemed waiting their opportunity—engravers ready to efface themselves in as exact reproductions of the draughtsman's designs as could be obtained. Even the well-trained, sympathetic engravers of the Thirties in France, the Sixties in England, were not willing to efface themselves wholly in their interpretation of the artist; sometimes they went so far as to think their interpretation more important than the original. To the engravers of the new school in America the perfect facsimile was the ideal. No more faithful reproductions were ever made than by the great American wood engravers of the Eighties and Nineties—Timothy Cole, Wolf, Jüngling, Whitney, Closson. Proc-

ess was already invented, already used, but at first none too promising to judge by the denunciations of editors who aimed at excellence, regardless of cost. Photo-engravers were "artistic duffers", "worse than shoemakers in anything requiring delicacy", Drake wrote to Pennell in 1881, and again that same year: "I have rejected all the photo-engravings as they came out—thick and unsatisfactory." Process improved with time and, for line drawings, many illustrators preferred it to wood engraving. But process brought in cheapness and cheapness kills art.

As much depends upon the printer as upon the artist and engraver, and Theodore L. De Vinne insisted upon the highest standard, forcing every ambitious printer to accept it; he also was willing to play the interpreter. The intelligent editor is no less indispensable and, at the end of the long barren years, he appeared as suddenly. It is to the everlasting credit of the *Century*, which began as *Scribner's*, that its art editors were the first in America to make the best their aim. While R. W. Gilder and his associate editors, R. U. Johnson and C. C. Buel, were seeking the finest work of the best writers, A. W. Drake, art superintendent, and W. Lewis Fraser, art manager, were bent on illustrating this text with the finest drawings of the most accomplished artists. To their policy, the *Century* owed its distinction, its influence and its fame. It forced the other magazines to adopt the same policy, *Harper's* promptly becoming a formidable rival, and a high level of illustration was maintained until process and photography, between them, were its ruin.

Conditions therefore were never more favorable than

when Joseph Pennell set out to be an illustrator, relying upon his own energy rather than upon chance, though it was largely to chance he owed his first commission. F. D. Stone, Librarian of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, had for a few years been the Pennells' neighbour in Fisher's Lane. He was a fairly keen collector of prints and in his house the boy spent many evenings poring over his portfolios. Among Stone's other visitors was Townsend Ward, self-appointed successor to Watson, to whose "Annals" he was adding a record of Germantown Road for the Pennsylvania Historical Society's *Magazine of History and Biography*. Townsend Ward also was interested in the youth—so surprising a youth to have emerged from the silent house in Fisher's Lane and the Friends' School—and asked him to illustrate the articles. The result was Joseph Pennell's first series of etchings, small plates of places he either knew or could copy from old prints: Stenton; the Wister house; the Logan house; Fair Hill Mansion; the mills, backgrounds for earlier battles with the Maguire gang; the old inns,—Rising Sun, Black Horse, Fox Chase. He contributed besides a number of drawings. In all the rendering was sincere, the picturesqueness of his subjects was expressed picturesquely, and already he revealed his never-failing sense of the right point of view. They strike one, especially the drawings, as almost indiscreet, exotic, unbecoming on such sober pages. The series ran through the *Magazine* in 1880 and 1881 and later reappeared, with three etchings by Blanche Dillaye added, in a big clumsy red portfolio, "Views of the Old Germantown Road", the edition limited to twenty copies.

Before the plates were all bitten, he was planning, scheming, besieging editors. He again ran to fires. He wrote and illustrated accounts of cycling tours for a tourists' paper at the Delaware Water Gap and for *Bicycling World*. He rode to Cooperstown with a plan for illustrating Cooper's novels, suggested the illustration of Poe's works to the Putnams, drew Walnut Grove, the Whartons' house for its owners. He tried *Harper's*, to be told by Charles Parsons that if he had nothing but his drawings to depend upon, he had better saw wood. He refused to be discouraged. A paper in *Scribner's* on "New York Shanty Town" gave him an idea. He had heard of a marshy stretch of ground in South Philadelphia called "The Mash", unknown except to enterprising Philadelphians who shot reed birds down there in the season. He explored it; was struck by the possibilities of its wide stretches of swampy ground, tumbled-down wooden houses, dilapidated oil refinery, chimneys and smoke rising above rank vegetation and stagnant pools; made three or four drawings; induced a professional writer he knew to outline the text of an article; carried manuscript and drawings to *Scribner's*, sure that greater hope lay in submitting a rounded-out scheme than a hodge-podge of sketches; and on the ferry boat across the Hudson discovered that "Unbelievable City" which was to haunt him through the years until, at the last, he settled down before it to record phase after phase of its inexhaustible beauty.

American editors had too much common sense to shut themselves up behind barred doors, keeping the unknown, would-be contributor kicking his heels at the outer gate. Pennell was admitted into the Presence

without delay. Drake liked the drawings, consulted the literary editors, and Pennell was sent home to finish the series, have the outline for the text carried farther, and, moreover, with a commission to make a drawing of Henry Calhoun's office from some one else's sketch. Nor was he forgotten when out of sight. As time passed and he did not appear, Drake wrote to ask what had become of the series, which he thought too good to lose. When Pennell made his second journey to New York, it was with finished drawings. They were accepted and paid for on the spot, Drake took him to lunch, on the way introduced him to J. F. Murphy who came to the office to look at the drawings and asked him to send them to the next exhibition of the Salmagundi Club. No wonder Broadway could not contain him as he walked along it between editor and artist, with what he called "a tight wad" in his pocket. The supreme moment was when, home again, he went straight to his mother's room, took the tight wad out of his pocket and threw it, note by note, on her bed. It was his vindication. The drawing of Calhoun's office was published in *Scribner's* for April, 1881, his first drawing in the magazine for which he worked during thirty years and more. "In the Mash" appeared in the July number the same year, the text by Maurice Francis Egan, but unsigned, as the original manuscript, turning out to be poor stuff, was put into his hands to rewrite.

After this, work streamed in of itself. The visits of the postman to the house in Fisher's Lane must have astounded the neighbours, still more the delicate, doubting mother, at last convinced that her son was not playing truant in a world of work. *Scribner's* could

not have enough of the new artist on its staff. Commissions tumbled over each other: articles on the Dunkards at Ephrata, on the Moravians with headquarters at Bethlehem. "And more luck," he wrote to his father from New York in May, "Drake likes the Bethlehem things very much, and wants me to make a drawing of an old house outside of Boston, so I shant be home before 4th day—and he is going with me to Virginia and we wont go till about the 3d week of June, so I can do something for Stone."

Other drawings ordered were of the Corcoran Gallery, the White House, the Capitol in Washington, and as far afield as Luray, where he heard at first hand Colonel Alexander Boteler's recollections of the John Brown Raid and persuaded him to write them for *Scribner's*, making one drawing as illustration, "John Brown's Fort", and the article was the prelude to *The Century's* famous and profitable War Series. Boteler was rather slow in writing it, and sent "an explanatory apology to our artistic friend Mr. Pennell with whom I was quite charmed." But Mr. Pennell did not charm them all at Luray. A firm of commission merchants in hides and leather ordered a drawing of their plant and when it came refused it indignantly because what they expected was "a very handsome picture, something showing every building on our property"—the sort of drawing Pennell would have made for no one. Other commissions from outside multiplied, the most memorable from Doctor Richard Maurice Bucke for three drawings to illustrate his "Walt Whitman": "The House at West Hills, Long Island" in which Whitman was born; "The Ancient Burial Ground of the Whitmans

at West Hills"; and "The Ancient Burial Ground of the Van Velsers at Cold Spring Harbor." Doctor Bucke wrote that the drawings were "very neat" which was probably meant as a compliment, and the book was published in Philadelphia by David McKay in 1883.

One commission of 1881 I cannot dismiss as lightly because of its influence in shaping Joseph Pennell's life and mine, though at the time it was given we had never as much as heard of each other. On May 3, 1881, Drake wrote: "Will you please send me, say—eight of your *very best* etchings of old Historical Buildings about Philadelphia with notes of description. It is possible that a short article on them may be worked up for *Scribner's*." These etchings were done for Pennell's own pleasure, with nobody to dictate subject or treatment or size. They were on a larger scale than the first series and he was concerned with the picturesqueness as well as the history of the town, finding this picturesqueness in the busy river front, slums overlooked by progress, forgotten inns, water stairs, the scaffolding on the hideous pile of the new City Hall. The zest with which he now worked on copper is felt in the greater freedom of line, the more personal treatment, the technical advance in handling, the originality in interpretation. He was beginning to find himself, to let himself go.

For etching as for illustration the moment was auspicious. In 1880 a Society of Etchers was formed in Philadelphia. New York etchers had set the example, their Etching Club dating back to 1877. Stephen Ferris, no doubt remembering the enthusiastic youth to whom he had given the freedom of the studio, mentioned Pennell as a possible member to Stephen Parrish, and the

result was a letter of interest in the history of American etching:

TO JOSEPH PENNELL

1017 Cherry Street
Philida May 10 1880

Mr. J. Pennell
Germantown
Dear Sir:

Mr. Peter Moran and myself have for some time wanted to form an "Etching Club" in Philada. We can only count up about 5 prospective members all told but the object is simply to have an organization and in time we may be able to bring in others as the interest in Etching in this city develops.

With the object in view of talking over plans and effecting an organization you are earnestly requested to meet at Mr. Moran's house 1322 Parrish St. on Friday afternoon at 5 o'clock (May 14) Hoping to see you at that time and place I am

Truly Yours
Stephen Parrish.

One of the Society's by-laws provided for an interchange of prints among members every other month, and the presentation of one print to the Society: a severe tax. Meetings were held now in Ferris' studio, now in James L. Claghorn's house, now in J. Neely's. Even when the first exhibition was held in 1882, only eight active members in all Philadelphia could be mustered. For a while Pennell was secretary, needing a substitute during his many absences and for the same reason incurring many fines for non-attendance and failure to produce the bi-monthly print. But interest in the Society must have renewed his interest in the Philadelphia plates.

Anyway, Drake found these plates good and accepted

the prints for *Scribner's*. The notes to accompany them developed into an article. My uncle Charles Godfrey Leland, home in Philadelphia after a long stay in London, was asked by Gilder to write it. Leland, at the time, was struggling to make a writer of me and I was doing my best to second him. My first appearance in print had been in the *Atlantic* a few months before, and with this article as a voucher, he wrote to Gilder proposing that I should do the *Century* paper, as he was too busy. Gilder said, all right, get into communication with the artist, which was by no means as simple as it sounded. It was one thing to find the studio in the Presbyterian Board of Publication Building, quite another to find the artist in his studio. Again and again my uncle and I climbed the high endless stairs only to be turned away by the notice OUT on the door. At last we did what we should have done at first; we wrote and made an engagement.

After all these years, I still wonder which amazed me most, the artist or the studio. I knew no artists, had never been inside a studio. I am not sure what I expected but I fancy something Ouidaesque. We read Ouida in those remote days, also newspaper "stories" of princely British and French painters working in palatial studios that seemed more fitting backgrounds for Ouida's splendid young guardsmen than for mere artists. What I found was a large bare room, a dusty floor without carpet, a high ceiling, a large uncurtained window. The chairs were few and either broken or littered up with odds and ends, most likely Poore's studio properties, for Poore was a figure painter. Nothing was on the two easels, a few drawings were pinned on the wall—

a room to work in perhaps, never to pose or play in. The artist waiting for us was young, tall, exceedingly thin, with brown hair, brown moustache and shortish brown beard, deep-set grey-green eyes, intent and serious beyond his years, holding one's attention at once. I remember thinking him a strange combination of shyness and self-possession. He was shy in meeting Leland whose reputation was greater than it is now and who looked the prophet: large, bearded, emphatic in voice and manner. And the youth who was "afraid of girls" may have found me terrifying. But when our preliminary talk brought us to the proposed article, Pennell's shyness vanished. Wholly self-reliant where his art was concerned, he stood in fear of neither man nor woman. And as he talked he fired one with the flame of his enthusiasm. Even Leland, who preferred to hold the floor himself, could not resist, was forced into silence or argument, and neither was his strong point. He talked for the love of talking, Pennell talked for interest in his subject.

Before we left the studio Pennell arranged to give me a list of his subjects or, better, to show them to me so as the more lucidly to explain them and the impression he wished to convey in his prints. I quickly learned that he was never out, never absent, never ungetatable, when it was question of work. We started on our walks within the next few days. They took us down to the Delaware, up to the Schuylkill, through streets of whose existence I had never dreamed though I lived just around the corner, to old churches, to new bridges, and finally to buildings and places not on his list, for he began to realize my interest and appreciation. He included far

Bartram's in one direction, the Wissahickon in the other, before we had done. He helped me to see Philadelphia as he, with his clear vision, saw it, while I could not mistake the strength of his sentiment for Penn's town, for the Friends whom the world's people had robbed of their inheritance, and above all for beauty. We quickly understood each other.

To these walks, which to me were a revelation, a fresh incentive came with Judge Tourgee's *Our Continent*, the new weekly which was to drive all others out of the field. The Judge was famous for an interval and the laurels of the now forgotten "Fool's Errand" were in their first freshness when he chose Philadelphia as his publishing headquarters, it may be, because he remembered the success of earlier Philadelphia periodicals associated with Poe and Leland. Emily Sartain, daughter of the well-known steel engraver, was the art editor and an artist herself. On the strength of his promise, for he had as yet published little, Pennell was asked to contribute, especially drawings of Philadelphia, and through him I was asked to write the articles. I think he enjoyed working with me. His other authors were men and women who had arrived, while I, like him, was a beginner. By December of 1881 my commissioned article was sent to the *Century*, as *Scribner's* became with the November number of that year, and I was deep in work for *Our Continent*. This explains the following letter, the first Joseph Pennell ever wrote me. It reveals, better than I could, his untiring industry, his keen vision, his enthusiasm, his inventiveness. We had talked—it never came to anything—of making a book of his Philadelphia prints and my text.

JOSEPH PENNELL'S FIRST WONDER OF WORK

Etching by Joseph Pennell

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

1334 Chestnut St.
12.15

Dear Miss Robins

I am very sorry I could not see your Mss. But it will only be a month or so anyway before it comes out. I have seen Porter & Coates and they seem to think very favorably of THE BOOK, but growl about the cost which according to their estimate will be something like $1,000—they think a limited edition should sell and I am to show them the plates and will then let you know about it—

I have thought over that subject which you mentioned the other day *Comedy* or Pantomine or whatever you wish to call it and I think it would afford some jolly illustrations and some points which I dont believe you thought of namely—the travelling "medicine men" and their clowns and the side shows of country fairs and many things of that sort—which are full of character. Why you could write a whole article—on a five cent show at a country fair—and I have a lot of sketches of these things on hand now. And you could bring in your historical part too. What I want to say *is* that I shall have a couple of weeks which I can devote to this—next week and week after—and as I am going to New York Monday I will speak to Gilder about it if you say so—Please let me know before Saturday.

Very truly yours
Jo Pennell

Our collaboration was interrupted by a letter from the *Century* at the end of 1881, asking Pennell if he would go to New Orleans to illustrate a series of papers on Louisiana and the Creoles by George W. Cable. Would he indeed? He would have been off at once but for the much advertised visit in January of Oscar Wilde, with his velvet knee breeches, his sunflower and the lecture destined to impose culture upon uncouth Americans. Pennell was eager to see the hero of *Punch* and to

hear him talk about art. He went to the lecture—we both went. He was edified, amused, and, to his greater amusement and edification, heard and saw Wilde in more intimate fashion on his journey to New Orleans. As he was starting, he wrote me about a new piece of work, material to be gathered by him on the way, and to his letter added a postscript to describe the meeting. The new work was an article suggested at the last moment by *Our Continent* and eventually published as "The Trip of the Mark Twain" in the *Century* for January, 1883.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

1334 Chestnut St
1/19/82
11.30 A.M.

My dear Mifs Robins

"It is the last time" train goes in half an hour. But I want to tell you something. Yesterday Mr. Davis asked me to get up an article on the Mississippi boatmen (roustabouts I believe they are called) making a sort of character sketch—somewhat like Mr. Leland's "Tinkers"—So I shall take the steamboat from Memphis to N.O. Now I think I can manage the drawings, but wont you help me with the Mss? for I doubt if I shall have the time to attempt any writing—even if I have the ability. I'll take notes all the way down and send them to you with the drawings—and you can then send the whole thing in We had better give the paper one more trial—and as they have given me an order for this article I think it will be a good opportunity what do you say?

I look forward to this ride down the river with much pleasure. Everything will be so suggestive and full of interest. Im going to look up the Acadians, who knows but I may find some of the children of "Basil the Blacksmith" and (but there is the 12 o'clock whistle & I must rush for my train) I only wish you were going for

I think we could have a jolly time The *fellow* who borrowed (?) Oscar has forgotten to return him But Ill get you a copy if I may—but mind I think he might say of himself as he did the other night of Byron & Wordsworth "that there is much in them (and his) works that is *not* altogether precious.
Please let me know what you think of the barge men Ill make as full notes as I can
My address in New Orleans (until I get there) (?) will be care of

W. M. Baker
104 Canal St

Good bye
Jo Pennell

P. S.

And what do you think has happened Not being a walking post office I put your letter in my pocket intending to mail it on the train—But when I entered the depot I suddenly saw "the Master" —(and remembered he was going to Washington—) he had doffed his knee breetches—and wore instead—a very tight pair of pants & patent leather shoes with "yaller" tops, kids ditto—brown velvet coat, green overcoat and necktie, and an awful bad hat—some what between an ancient stove pipe and an obsolete derby here it is

But what will you say when I tell you that when the door opened I *actually had the pleasure* (?) of punching him in the back with my umbrella—as we rushed for seats—*And* when we got in the Pullman

my number was 5 & his 6—Well I gazed upon the "soulful eyed" for some time, and at last as he looked up from his paper ventured to ask him how he liked our magazines—and after that for more than half an hour I never heard a man talk as he did—There is no doubt of the fascination of his conversation—for unless he tells everyone the same things he told me it was simply wonderful especially his descriptions of Whistler's paintings—He merely informed me that *he* made Whistler's reputation—though in my humble estimation Whistler did his best work before Oscar had left Mamma Wilde's apron strings. He has a way of getting close to you and looking right into your eyes and with his face about six inches from yours he keeps up a sort of musical sound which you soon find out is his ordinary way of speaking—I dont wonder at the "love sick maidens," you should have seen how he literally fascinated a beautiful Baltimore girl—She was gone in five minutes—I dont know what you will think of this stuff—but I let myself loose sometimes and this is only the beginning of my trip—I have read Cable's "Creole Days"—and if N.O. is anything like the pictures he has drawn—it will really be a paradise for me—please let me know about the "business" part of the *note* anyway

Pennell

CHAPTER V

A WINTER OF SUNSHINE IN NEW ORLEANS WITH CABLE · HIS MOTHER'S DEATH (1881–1882)

The sudden drop into Latin America was an amazing experience for a youth who came of a race unaccustomed to public show of emotion and belonged to a sect trained to silence and asceticism—a youth whose travels so far had carried him little farther than his native State of Pennsylvania, the New Jersey seacoast, and the City of New York. But from the first he took to French people, approved of French dinners and French wines, from the first felt at home in the Latin atmosphere which was like nothing he had known or imagined. And he revelled in the winter's warmth, could not have enough of it, he who throughout his life never could reconcile himself to cold. The many letters he wrote from New Orleans to me and to Drake overflow with his joy in the southern town and the southern life. They are not merely the most personal, but the most amusing record of that wonderful winter. Not that work did not figure in them as well as play. Our article on Philadelphia is often referred to before and when and after it appeared in the *Century* for March, 1882, also an article of mine, with Loki for subject, in the *Atlantic* that same month. And as always, his new schemes and new suggestions were without end. His first letter was written almost at once

on his arrival and retained the gaiety and freshness of his first impressions.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Maison de Mme. Castaing
Chambres à louer
Nombre 5 Rue de Saint Pierre
Place d'Armes
Nouvelle Orleans 1/31/82

My dear Miss Robins

You may indeed envy me, what do you think of having "a first floor on the ancient *Place d'Armes*, the most historic spot west of the Mississippi, as Mr. Cable said yesterday, with a veranda on which I have been sitting looking toward the Cathedral and the quarter hour is now striking, along side is the "Calaboose" which Mr Cable describes in the *Grandissimes*, and on the other the ancient *Palais de Justice*—a hundred feet from me the old *Café de Louisiana* where Frowenfeld went and a little further down the same Saint Peter St. the house of "Sieur Georges"—and now my landlady is singing this chanson—

"*Pon—pon-pon qui frappe à ma porte*

but as I am not up in "spellin" I merely state that she has been expressing a belief that it is her husband, and a desire that the "*diable*" would fly away with him.

Is this France or America? French certainly are the people, but when I inspected my pocket book and sent for some money instanter I am reminded that I am still in America—As to the boat men I have sent you a few pages of notes but as to when you will receive the drawings dont ask me conundrums. On a short walk this afternoon I made a list of about twenty things to be done immediately—Tomorrow I go to work on the Cathedral, just think of it a real American Cathedral—discovered by George W. Cable—and spotted (at least I hope to) by Jo P—Cable is just jolly. I was with him from eight o'clock yesterday a.m. till night—This is really living down here—

I've got another plan—for you something that will just suit but wait a few days and I'll let you know about it I'll send on the drawings

as soon as they are done—Suppose *Harper's* are all right as they sent me a note saying they had a checque for me. Tell them to send yours to you. Please do write about what you are doing because, except Cable, I only know a lot of old people down here and I live away out of the world—My address in English is—care of Mme. Castaing 6 rue de St. Pierre

New Orleans

He got on extremely well with Cable, "the tiny little man with a black beard and bright eyes." Every day New Orleans strengthened the charm of its southern beauty in his eyes. It helped him to understand better than ever the work of the Spaniards, to appreciate the truth in their rendering of the brilliant sunshine and the quivering shadows of the south. The appeal of the architecture, no less Latin than the life of the town, was as strong. He could not see enough of it, could not draw and etch enough of it, though he might be far exceeding the number of illustrations the *Century* commissioned. He went straight to the places he already knew in Cable's stories: Madame Delphine's, the Café des Exilés, Jean-à-Poquelin's, as far as the Belles Demoiselles Plantation. He discovered the picturesqueness down by the river, in the market, in the old cemetery. He studied the Cathedral, the Cabildo, the Pontalba Mansions, the many famous and important landmarks. Cable, before they met, promised through the *Century* to show him enough in half a day to keep him busy for a month or two. In the end I fancy Pennell was showing New Orleans to Cable. He had a genius for discovering the picturesque. And he expressed the character of the southern town and the southern sunshine, which he was seeing for the first time, as if he had been

familiar with them all his life. I can add nothing to his letters, but perhaps I can make one reference in the next more clear. I had written him of an Art Club started in Philadelphia by Leland, who just then was preaching that the world's salvation lay in the cultivation of "the minor arts" by every man, woman and child. Pennell had no patience with the amateur in art. To him art was too serious to be played with. He gathered the idea that I was indulging in Philadelphia's new pastime when the truth was I was merely acting as Treasurer to oblige my uncle. Pennell's characteristic lecture made his mistake well worth while.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

The whole air was filled with the odor of orange blossoms.

New Orleans
6 Rue de St. Pierre
2/19/1882

My dear Mifs Robins

Yea, verily, verily, I say unto you, you are to make it your own and publish it under your name Why not? dont you want notes to work from, and what if they are *rather copious*, what else had I to do for six days?

I believe our object is to get our names in the paper, thats what we want is it not! But dont flatter me any more about my scribbling

I have seen the first number [*Our Continent*] and several of it. There must have been an enormous edition of COMPLIMENTARY COPIES issued I got one from about every person connected with the concern—I dont agree with you about the pictures by Pyle & Schell on the first page which are good but the rest——Still I got a proof of my Tinker the other day, and the engraver has so changed the expression of the gentleman's face that I didnt know him at first. If I was only at home—and had that "wood chopper".

I think the reading matter most decidedly "Hollow"

As to voudouism—"reste tranquille" as the small darkies say

to the smaller of their species—I have already gotten *something* on that subject

I dont understand why you havent heard anything from *Harper's* —I got a checque the other day for $50.00 small enough for that drawing which is to be published full page, but I distinctly told them to remit for the Mfs.—to you, but if this is intended for both drawing & manuscript I'll "divvy" with you, but rest assured there will be a small sized whirlwind raised around Franklin Square Please let me know anyway what they have done by this time— Before you get this the Old Philadelphia will be out; I want very much to see how it will look—because I have heard a good deal about my etchings in *The Herald*, and I want that these engravings should look well; they will probably be spoiled in the printing though—

Do you know that I feel like giving you a small sized lecture—at all sorts of risks—Dont you allow yourself to be drawn away from Literature on any account, especially by decorative delusions—or art clubs (N.B. any *poor* artists admitted) Though if the idea is that we shall change places, all right, but I think I see you down here with about fifty small wretches, and a small sprinkling of large ones, around you each one trying to get directly in front of you, and all spluttering some unintelligable jargon composed of English French & *Gumbo*, you entreat, command, expostulate and (tell it not) swear at them but they merely smile blandly and stand stock still in front No one has ever touched this glorious material, and that any "Americain" should come down here and live among them, and *paint* all these old houses is some thing beyond them— But the faces one sees peeping out from behind half open doors, and windows—which have a special handle—to enable one to open them just a crack and peep out And the most beautiful forms, sweeping the pavements and coming out of back alleyways—with complexions of "old ivory" as G.W.C. says—But alas I am entirely barred out, for Cable the only "Americain" down here who knows them is the most cordially hated little man in New Orleans, and all on account of the *Grandissimes;* and so he can do nothing with the better class—while the others—why the other day a gentleman slightly under the influence of something he shouldn't have been

under said to me "Yo-o-ou ain-ain-n Americain and Hi ham a Creole and-a-fora—feefty cents—a—Hi will cut you hinto small piès-ces—but as there wasent that amount of money in the crowd I still live—The lecture is over—but the moral is—when you can get articles in *The Atlantic* and *Century* dont go back on them

We are right in the midst of the Carnival and on Thursday night I went to see "Momus" In fact have been awfully demoralized balls and parties right straight ahead—and thinking you *might* get some new ideas—in spelling at any rate,—from the published accounts of the Ramayana—I send it to you—it was the most stupendous piece of gingerbread work I ever saw—But the ball was superbly gotten up

I suppose I ought not to compel you to wade through six pages of this stuff but when the machine gets started I cant stop it—

As to the many few hundred plans of the future—a large number of them—end in this way

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE—CONTENTS

.....By ELIZABETH ROBINS

Illustrations by Jo Pennell

As soon as I hear from *Our Continent* I'll send on the drawings of the Boatmen

Very sincerely yours
Joseph Pennell

New Orleans 2/24

My dear Mifs Robins

Of course it is entirely wrong for me to effuse (?) so much—but I want to congratulate you on Loki & Old Philadelphia (and your retirement, in such a brilliant manner, from the paths of literature (?)) which have just made their appearance here. I think Loki excellent, and you give not only a good idea of that gentleman but of the whole mythology—I dident know before that you were up on this subject too. I wish we could work up something on that myth or legend about the spirits of the dead you know, I think we might made something weird and fantastic, and it is a beautiful story—That is

if you are not disgusted with the manner in which my etchings are printed, as I am,—said a great number of naughty & terrible things to day on that subject.

I think your description of our tramp one of the jolliest things that has appeared lately—and Gilder Johnson Carey Mrs. Herrick and Co. may say what they please

But Cable (good soul) will never trust me again, when he learns my true character (How could you give me away so?) But I can manage to exist, as he introduced me to some "oh such pretty" Creoles last night—

Ill send on the drawings for the boatmen tomorrow so that you can send them to *Our*, brick dust red covered *Continent*—and I am sure this will go through I havent got time to work up the other sketches and shall only send you one or two, one head especially of a "colud pusson, with a soulful eye" named Billy, and you may treat him as you choose, but be sure and write *something about him* or everything will go wrong again—You must pardon my scribbling but realy I cant help it

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

TO A. W. DRAKE

New Orleans 2/26/1882

My dear Mr. Drake

I have succeeded in translating your letter—Though I doubt not but you have just as much work to wade through mine—You say you suppose Ive seen everything why I've seen *nothing* outside this French Town and dont want to—except a lot of pretty Creoles who live up town and to whom Cable introduced me, though I dont believe he would have done so had he known my true Character as Mifs Robins shows me up—isent that a fearful give away—some of those etchings printed beautifully especially "Mammie Saurkraut" and Chestnut St. Bridge—Whitney never did much better reproductive work than that bunch of houses did he? Thats one of the few things which I have ever done which came any way near satisfying me, and it might have been better—many thanks for selling my

work at the water color—your commission shall be a copy—(of whatever it was) for yourself if you want it.

I want to etch several subjects down here for you but havent any facilities for doing so—

And Cable & I have a plan but—*reste tranquille Je parle Français à présent Monsieur.*

I have done about all the work for the history in the French Quarter and yet I dont seem to have touched it—but if I can show the fellows what there is down here I shall be satisfied—The first article is finished all but one drawing which I shall do this week—Next week we go to Barataria Bay—The pirates' nest—and after that—well I cant see any further—

I dont see how I can get through before May, at any rate I want to do the thing thoroughly—and I am not going to hurry—

Oh I've struck the cotton yards and talk about sun light—why I dont believe any African Desert effects can be stronger—If I could only come somewhere near nature but I come home often exhausted and feeling that I shall never get there.

As to *iron work* its lovely—why Im getting in just as much as I can—I found a gateway the other day about one hundred & fifty years old—than which I dont believe there is anything finer in this Country—you shall see it I am now at work on two vignettes of old lamps and a wonderful wrought monogram which I discovered—containing a whole name in a small circle with beautiful foliated work around it—

I am trying and with success to get Cable from his restorations as he calls them and showing him that the material around us is of more value than anything we can make up—

But I fear I am ruined (certainly am financially at present) for anything in the north because I am getting so accustomed to seeing—buildings all awry and Rico trees and Spaniards and Creoles—around "promixcous"—That everything at home will be awfully tame You dont know how much I enjoy this life—this sort of work is really worth living for—and though some boobs and asses may sneer, yet as Blake said—"I only wish they may have half as much real pleasure as I do."

As to those Washington things I shall do the *gateway* and a back

and side view of house showing grounds the large park like picture which Johnson wanted

I believe the reason I can work so down here is because I am out doors all the time—

You talk about receptions by the Cosmos, (I ve been there) why the way in which your humble servant has been lionized—is too awful and this picture is a literal fact

N.B. it has shaved its beard off and become very swell—

Please dont get alarmed at the size of this letter but write me another one "wiz your own hand"

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

New Orleans 3/6/1882

My dear Mifs Robins

Hope you will excuse that telegram but really it was necessary —another page in OUR CONTINENT like the fearful thing at-

tributed to me, would utterly blast anyone's reputation I *did* make a drawing of *some vases* but not that thing.

Just keep the Mss and drawings till I come home and we will work them into *The Century* or *Harper's* which will be much better every way. Ive had enough of Burton and Co—for some time to come—Next! I have a set of proofs of Old Philadelphia for you Shall I send them to you or keep them till I return

I only wish I was in Philada now so we could go to work on the Gipsies (And make another hit—

I really can say no more for my mother who has been an invalid for several years, was taken away last Tuesday, and though it was not unexpected still it came very suddenly

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

New Orleans 3/26/82

My dear Miss Robins

You can do nothing for me, but it a great consolation to be engaged in a work in which you can sink all your troubles trials and cares. But I sincerely hope you may never know what it is to feel *alone*, and that small work means something in such a time.

I'll tell you the reason I dident say anything about *Harper's Weekly*—I dont care about that firm knowing that I am down here—I also think we can make something acceptable to the "Centurians" out of those boatmen—But if you cant wait send them (the Mfs & drawings) in. I know I should have enjoyed your afternoon tea—but—if you had only been down here, we both might have called upon "the Queen of the Voudoos" as I did yesterday afternoon, and I am going back next week. How does that strike you for the second "taking" article—but wait, I have enlisted all the "mammies" and aunties of my acquaintance, and if I could only speak "Gumbo" should be all right—but wait!

There are two or three dialects down here which I believe would puzzle Mr. Leland Can he speak Gascon or the "Lingo". The first is simply terrible—How does that Tinker look he hasent yet put in an appearance in these parts—? Horrible I suppose—I will send

you those proofs to day—Im glad that our first was a success—You are the one lucky star that I have, something happens to every body else even Cable—

I really cant tell anything about getting to Washington next month though I want to see you and tell you of lots of things—Why I dont know how I shall get through next week—I am to go and work at the Ursuline Convent—the Archbishop—a splendid old man, has given me permission—but there are about two hundred young Creoles there, at school—and it will be an experience, something terrible Im afraid—anyway. Ill let you know about it, if I get out alive. From the outside the building is truly Italian, and if I can only get a drawing of the Cloister—which one of the fathers has told me about—He says it is a bit from Florence and if he enthuses over it you may imagine there is something to draw—I dont intend that this shall be my last winter in the south if I can help it—You have no idea of the immense mass of material down here both literary and artistic, which is rapidly passing away with nobody to touch it—Cable hasent begun to do so. Wont you let me know when you go to Washington and Ill see what I can do about getting there.

Very sincerely your friend
Jo Pennell

TO A. W. DRAKE

New Orleans 4/5/1882

My dear Mr Drake

I am still alive, and perspiring, and the work is almost done and though you owe me a letter, I shant wait any longer—but will merely say that I have been stricken with another idea—

Mr. Cable and I are going to etch, in this way I shall do about a dozen plates of *his houses*, "The Grandissimes' Madam Delphine's, Sieur Georges' etc. and he will write the text on a portion (or rather a small & separate) of the copper plate—In the same way that Lalanne, illustrated old Paris. We will get some grasping publisher to bring them out—He will manage that—but, this is my

idea, why should you not take the etchings & text and use them in *The Century* in this way

[Drawing]

I mean making from seven to a dozen full page autographic things it would be something new, and you have never done anything of the sort—with the exception of that opera with music, and Mr. Bunner's play—
It will make without doubt, the most interesting & artistic series of etchings I have yet done, and I mean to have them ready for the next exhibition

I dont know whether I make this perfectly clear, but I hope to see you in about 3 weeks I've gotten enough material outside your work to keep me going for a year—But I greatly fear everything will look exceedingly mean and commonplace, in the north—after this glorious place

Wont you write me & tell me what you think of this plan

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

The death of his mother was the one dark cloud that fell on the long winter of sunshine in New Orleans. Her last illness, pleurisy, was short, and hope was not lost until the very end. Only a day or two before that end came, his father, who was very nearly as ill, threatened with bronchial pneumonia, wrote urging him to stay and do his work, for both were on the road to recovery and would be all right, the doctor said, in a few days. Nurses were efficient, Aunt Martha was in charge. When the wire, telling him of his loss, reached Pennell, he could not get back in time for the funeral. He therefore decided not to leave New Orleans until his drawings were finished. Work was his stay and support at the worst, as at the best moments of his life. His affection, as I have said, was evidently less

for his mother than for his father. He felt her lack of sympathy, her disapproval born of fear for his future. This probably made his grief the more acute when he lost her, conscious perhaps that something may have been wanting on his side also. He was shy of betraying emotion, but these two letters, written after her death, give at least a glimpse of his sorrow.

CHAPTER VI

WORK IN PHILADELPHIA · THE SECOND BIG COMMISSION (1882–1883)

After his winter of sunshine and beauty, busy days and good dinners, Cable and Creoles, the home-coming in the early spring was sad enough. Though sympathy between mother and son had been slight, the small family was adrift without her. His father was weak after the winter's illness. The Fisher's Lane house was "To let." Boarding threatened to be Pennell's fate in the near future. For a sensitive man, an illustrator with drawings to finish, drawings to begin, journeys to go, the burden was heavy, and Pennell went through one of the intervals of black despair to which he was a victim throughout his life.

Luckily, the *Century* editors, once they got hold of him, were loath to lose him and editorial letters were a continual prod forcing him to be up and doing. Having learned how reliable he was, they relied upon him in emergencies small as well as great—Drake to get a little life into a dull article, Roswell Smith for advice about the lettering in the new Dictionary, the Editorial staff for a drawing of their editor's birthplace. Had Pennell lived in New York, interruptions must have proved serious to the big commissions and the suggestions for work that multiplied without end. A

series on "Manners and Customs" by Doctor Eggleston, an article on a new steamship, an article on a Children's Aid Society clamoured for his illustrations, but were postponed or abandoned because of the immediate need for additional drawings of the White House, greater promise in "Silhouettes"—something for a man of Leland's ability to write about, Gilder thought—and a bigger advertisement in the Military Camp of Philadelphia's famous City Troop, playing at soldiers in the summer time, and the equally famous State in Schuylkill, "The Oldest Club in Philadelphia"; the two papers written by Bertie Adams, correct Philadelphian, officer in the Troop, correct member of the Club. Besides, despite our assertion of independence, we had not let go of *Our Continent* since it provided the chance to carry out schemes the *Century* had no room for. Miss Emily Sartain could not have too much of Pennell's work, if Judge Tourgee could. This is a message the Judge sent him once: "For a man who can do such lovely things, Joe Pennell can do the meanest work I have ever seen. Tell him we are short of imagination here and to give us more drawing and less for the imagination. No three wiggles, you know, and call that Wennice!"—which helps to explain *Our Continent's* want of success. One of Pennell's first letters to me after his return was to arouse my interest in Philadelphia's old churches and graveyards as subjects for our renewed collaboration. The next told me that his drawings of St. Joseph's, the old Jesuit Church, were approved and, with flamboyant flourishes, that "The Voyage of the Mark Twain", after various vicissitudes, would be published in the September *Century*.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Fisher's Lane, 6/13 1882
8 P. M.

My dear Miss Robins

I hope you have gotten over the effects of the tramp. I was utterly "*ausgespielt*", to say the least.

But to-day I got a couple of facts which you may not know about. 1st. I made a drawing of the Church at 6th and Spruce, "looks like a coffin", so the little lay brother at St. Joseph's describes it. There is a story that in the graveyard *Evangeline* is buried under a slab, which the Father, who has charge there, showed me. Though of course this cant be proved—still it is a pretty story that she should be there—and wont it work in? Here is the inscription

+
I.H.S.

Ground presented by the Trustees of Holy Trinity Church to St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum in the year of Our Lord 1854 and the Vault erected by the Ladies Society of St. Joseph's.

Sister Camilla died August 10, 1819. Sister Anastasia died December 20 1826. Sister Petronilla Smith Aug 3—and so they continue down to 1860—now why mightent Sister Camilla or Sister Anastasia have been Evangeline? who lived to a good old age after Gabriel's death—though of course she should not have done so. Still if you feel like it I would bring it in.

Then Stephen Girard was buried here before he was taken to the College—and the yard is full of good old French and Spanish names —Im going to make some drawings in it—so you can work any of these things in that you want to—I never knew that this was a Catholic Church before to-day, my first recollection of it is rather singular—I remember passing when the walls were covered with show bills announcing a panorama or something of that sort of Pilgrim's Progress—in which the Devil and blood and thunder & lightning played prominent parts—and his majesty was displayed from one end of the building to the other. I asked the Father about this and he said it was during a row that some of the trustees had—

"and Oh but it was a terrible time"—I wish I could get a drawing of it as it then was. I shall also use St. Augustine's and St. Mary's—so *you* can say as much or little as you wish to about these churches.

What do you think—an individual named Helen Campbell (dont know anything more about her) has had the cheek to do—nothing short of it—*write an article for that series* on

Old Philadelphia Inns

and then ask me to give her some points on the subject "because she knows I am fully up on such subjects" and then illustrate it for her—I think I shall refer her to an article written by a Miss Robins—and published in *Harper's*. Talking about "coming round".

Still I think I can impress the Judge with the desirability of publishing some additional chapters in "that series"—which we can do in the fall—

I'll bring up the drawings and Blake Thursday—and cant you have your perfect Sunday afternoons continued "in our next"—so we can really enjoy Cresheim

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

Wont you please send me the initial letter of the Church article on a postal (if you have started yet.) J.P.

A number of Pennell's *Our Continent* drawings for various articles, including mine on St. Joseph's, were published in book form in 1883: "A Sylvan City or Quaint Corners in Philadelphia", republished in 1922.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Fisher's Lane 6/20

In plain English "The Voyage" is to be taken—"is accepted"—down for September I believe—got a telegram Monday to come over this A. M.—did so, they say it is all right and only want some more drawings and a joke or two—I tried to see you on the steamboat this P.M.—hadent time—But did see four Hungarian Romanies with their bears and almost missed the train in consequence—Also I

believe the St. Joseph's is all right because my drawings are accepted —And again—They "The Centurians" will take an article on Convents—there is a chance for you to rival Victor Hugo to say the least—if you want to do it—really dont you think we can make a good thing of this?

Let us in future always look at the moon over our *left shoulders.*

Very sincerely yours
Jo Pennell

The great excitement for us that spring and summer, however, was the Gypsies. I had caught the Romany fever from Leland and passed it on to Pennell who began now to think a great deal of the Gyspies of whom he had never thought before. He saw articles on their camps and, learning from Leland something of their habits, was eagerly awaiting their spring halt in Philadelphia on their way from winter in Florida to summer in Maine. At the first sign of them in their familiar haunts he was to send us word, for the Gypsy, here to-day, is apt to be off to-morrow. The word came early in May, and the next Sunday saw us all three in Oakdale

Kyshto Bak

Will Exhibit in all parts of the civilized
EARTH
on or about September · MDCCCLXXXII ·
MADEMOISELLE ROBINS
GREAT MORAL CONGLOMERATE AGGREGATION

THE
VOYAGE
of the
"MARK TWAIN" !!!!
THIS GRAND CONSOLIDATED COMPOSITION · HAS BEEN · ENDORSED BY THE EDITOR · of the
CENTVRY

AND WE FEEL SVRE THE INTELLECENT PVBLIC WILL SECOND HIS SOVND JVDGEMENT - BY MANY PUFFS -
VPON THIS APPEARANCE - THIS MOST TALENTED AVTORESS WILL DE·ASSITED BY M. Powell WHO WILL NOT ONLY CONTRIBVTE HIS — — — — (ahem) ILLVSTRATIONS - BVT ADD SEVEREAL NEW "JOAX" - BY ORDER - OF THE · POWERS - (for further information see - (over)

Park far up Broad Street. Before the time for the flight farther north had come we discovered more Gypsies in a little clearing out Germantown way, in a wood on the outskirts of West Philadelphia, by the reservoir in Camden. As I was a novice in the Affairs of Egypt, I made way for Leland, the master, who wrote the article, "Visiting the Gypsies," published a year later in the April *Century*, 1883. The Gypsies were no disappointment to Pennell. He saw amusing lines and curves and colour in the patched and smoke-stained tents, character in the types. He, who was not considered a figure draughtsman by the *Century*, rendered the character of the *dyes*, the *chies* and *chavies* with striking truth, just as ten years later he made the Jews of Brody and Berditchev live on his paper.

Our "Gypsying" reached its climax when Hungarian Gypsies came to play in the Männerchor Garden uptown, where people went to drink a glass of beer or a sherry cobbler and listen to music on hot summer evenings, a harmless amusement that the Pecksniffian Eighteenth Amendment has done away with. Hungarian Gypsies had never played before in Philadelphia but it was summer time, the Männerchor was in a quarter of the town where the correct Philadelphian did not venture, and they had no great success. To us, at the height of our Romany excitement, however, their coming was an event. With the magical passwords *Pal*—though they called it *Prala*—and *Kushto Bak*—to which they gave their own variation, the inevitable happened and we were *pals*, however we might differ in saying the word. They left the Garden for Belmont in Fairmount Park and there we followed them. As I

BARTRAM'S

Lithograph by Joseph Pennell

look back the summer seems wonderful, less for the Gypsy music than for its revelation to me of Joseph Pennell's inexhaustible energy. Evening after evening he would meet me in the train at Fisher's Lane, for I was spending the hot months farther up the line at Chestnut Hill, take the long street-car ride to the Park, the long walk to Belmont; then, when the music was over, return with me not merely to Fisher's Lane, but with the old-fashioned American gallantry, all the way to Chestnut Hill and my front door, though, by this gallantry, he missed his last train and, at midnight, had to start on the long walk down the Germantown Road to Fisher's Lane. He played as he worked, never let mere physical discomfort interfere—the secret of his success.

Had he carried out the *Century's* plans for him he would have been spending his summer evenings not at the Männerchor and Belmont, but in Italian towns. The editors, more than satisfied with the New Orleans work, arranged to run Cable's articles through the magazine as soon as possible and afterwards to publish them in what Cable, writing to his wife, called "a handsome parlour table book . . . with the Pennell things. Isn't that nice?" To finish the story, I might as well add that "The Creoles of Louisiana" was issued in 1884 and that the illustrations were so approved in New Orleans as to be pirated for a guidebook in 1885, a fact of which Pennell knew nothing until his next visit to New Orleans in 1921, when the guide was shown him by Mr. Edward L. Tinker. His language was not repeatable when he discovered not merely the piracy, but the fancy wreaths, orange branches, the

easel, the gabled window by which the pirates thought to add attraction to the drawings.

The immediate outcome of the *Century's* satisfaction was the more important commission for ten etchings to illustrate a series of articles on Tuscan cities by William Dean Howells, then not on the threshold of his fame like Cable, but in its full glory. An idea prevails that in the great days of the American illustrated magazines money was paid to contributors with Croesus-like prodigality. It may be worth recording that for these ten etchings Pennell was offered five hundred dollars, together with his steamer ticket going and coming, nor was he to make any use of the prints until after their publication in the *Century*. He accepted, because the work would take him to countries it was his desire to see, also because he knew that if he made good plates, he would be amply repaid later on in reputation, if not in money. Besides, he, who found work everywhere, would find other things to do in Italy, while, to the Howells articles, the *Century* added one on Edinburgh and twelve on the English Cathedrals. Years of commissioned work in Great Britain and on the Continent for the *Century* alone were before him.

The journey was postponed from the summer till the autumn, from the autumn till the winter. In the summer he could not tear himself away from the Männerchor and Belmont and Romany music. In the autumn he was entangled in the politics of art and sport and in civic duties. Little more than twelve months had passed since his illustrations were first published in the *Century* and already he was widely known, recognition coming to him from all sides, in the most practical form from

Frederick Keppel. Years afterwards Keppel wrote in the *Outlook* (September 23, 1905): "that admirable man James L. Claghorn first made me acquainted with the work of Joseph Pennell, who was not then twenty years old, and I well remember the glow of pride on Mr. Claghorn's face as he showed me certain etchings representing street scenes in Philadelphia, and his remark, 'This is original work by one of our own boys; now what do you say to that?' "

This talk must have been at the Union League in New York, for Keppel, in a letter to Pennell, dated November 11, 1882, said: "I write to let you know that I saw some of your etchings for the first time at the Union League Club exhibition, and that the next time I am in Philadelphia I shall take the liberty of calling on you in reference to the sale of them." Before the end of the year the etchings had been seen by Keppel, bought, and paid for; later on in March, 1884, a formal agreement was signed, and this was the beginning of Pennell's close and friendly relations with the firm of Frederick Keppel and Company that lasted, without a cloud or a break, until his death.

Interest in etching had been suddenly awakened in America, it is hard to say how or why, whether the youthful New York Etching Club, and Philadelphia Society of Etchers created the demand or were created by it, but for the first time in the United States the public inclined to think about art at all realized that etching came under that heading. Pennell's Philadelphia and New Orleans series gave him immediately high rank among etchers far older, with a far larger number of plates to their credit. He was invited to show in

every exhibition, included in every article or book on the subject. From 1883 he was almost every year a "non-resident" exhibitor at the New York Etching Club. When in the spring of 1882 Mrs. Van Rensselaer was preparing a paper on "American Etchers" for the *Century*, she asked permission to reproduce one of his prints, selecting a New Orleans subject, "Pilot Town" which he then called "An American Venice." S. R. Koehler, after the *Art Review*, of which he had been editor, came to an untimely end, was preparing for Cassell's in the spring of the same year a collection of prints by the most distinguished American etchers and Pennell was one of the twenty invited. The collection, with the title "Original Etchings by American Artists," was published that same year (1883), Pennell's contribution, his "Ponte Vecchio." Another collection of the kind quickly followed, White, Stokes and Allan's "Some Modern Etchings", Pennell in this represented by his "Ponte San Trinita." Other kinds of recognition multiplied. In Philadelphia by this time he had been elected not merely to the Society of Etchers, but to the Academy Art Club, the Sketch Club, the exclusive Penn Club, the dining Triplets. He had been put on the Bi-Centennial Art Committee and not solely for the honour of it. Once it was discovered that another of his talents was for hard work, he was not spared. His few letters to me that autumn were always written in a hurry, as can be easily seen, in between his numerous engagements, his many etchings and more drawings. I should perhaps explain that I thought of going to Richmond for a few days and he hoped to be there at the same time; also that in his first plunge into Romany he took to

calling me *Miri dearie Dye* and when I told him that Dye meant an old woman or mother,—he said he liked the sound of it, and refused to give it up.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Fisher's Lane 10.23

My dear Authoress—Ditto do—ditto do—As far as Richmond and despondency and the complications of life, Bi-Centennials and Bicycle meets are concerned. I know we could have had a good time in Richmond and I shant do a stroke of work this week—simply because I was fool enough to go on the Bi-Cen Committee and do a lot of work with neither credit nor cash in it.

No Romanies I know of either, but Sunday *Sala* [morning] cant we run off somewhere all day, now dont have some previous engagement. Really I wish the *Beng* [devil] would fly away with things generally just now—

Cant we go to the Wissahickon or Camden or *anywhere*

Very sincerely

J. Pennell

I hope you can make this out but Im "all of a fluster"—"flabbergastered".

Fisher's Lane 12.13.82

Dear Miss Robins

December 12 to 15 Harper
December 15 to 25 Miss Robins article
" 25 " 30 Picturesque Canada
" 30 " Jan 3 Harper

Extract from mental notes of work. So you see you dont come in until day after to-morrow, but I will endeavor to get round to-morrow evening and get the Mss.—Really I havent had any intention of "throwing you over"—But when I had six etchings to get off in time for an exhibition—and am now endeavouring to stir up numerous individuals—and impress them with the necessity of contributing to that exhibition—get off several hundred invitations to a reception—print etchings—go skating—and several other small

matters—if I do come up *one day ahead* of my plans you must pardon me—And I dont know when I am going—for they have made arrangements for me to go South again

E—Li—Qua—

But I ll be after the Mss. to-morrow

Yours truly

Joseph Pennell

The exhibition was the first held by the Philadelphia Society of Etchers which had not let the grass grow under its feet since that first meeting of five enthusiasts in Peter Moran's house. Pennell made as fine a group as he could, with the Historical Society Series, the New Orleans and Philadelphia plates, the "Café des Exilés" chosen to represent him in the catalogue. Keen from the start in the technical side of the art, he sent in addition a "Frame showing clean compared with artistic printing, also a wood-engraving from etching and a process print from the same, subject of plate 'Pilot Town'." To hold any exhibition was a bold adventure for a society both young and penniless. But the members felt that if they adventured at all, it must be magnificently, and the exhibition was planned on a large scale. Etchers from other towns and countries were invited, Whistler, Haden, Buhot, Legros, Fortuny, Bracquemont among them. Pennell was the secretary, and the correspondence was enormous, for they had, in addition to the show, undertaken a reception to Seymour Haden, who was in America lecturing, and the coming of the great "Surgeon-Etcher", Whistler's brother-in-law, who helped Hamerton to revive interest in etching, was an event of importance to American etchers. The Lotus Club gave him a re-

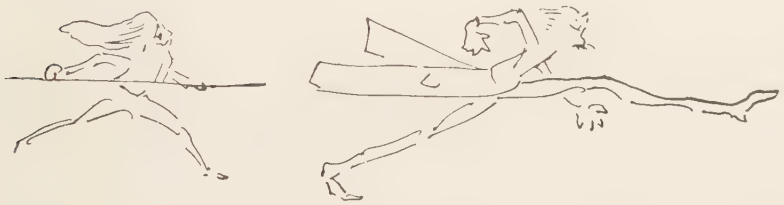
ception in New York, Philadelphia could not lag behind. To the reception I was not—no women were —invited. The exhibition I cannot well forget, since it was the beginning of my long career as art critic. I had just begun to write for the *American*, one of the numerous Philadelphia papers doomed to an early death by Philadelphia indifference. Mr. Jenkins, the editor, without asking my qualifications, agreed to take an article. Pennell lent me Hamerton's "Etching and Etchers" and gave me a press ticket. He wrote in anticipation:

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Fisher's Lane 12.19.82

Dear Miss Robins—

Were you ever not in haste—I applaud the discretion, judgment, clear far sightedness of Mr. Jenkins and agree with Mr. Hamerton. The row begins at nine A.M. I shall be there all day probably but you had better come early—lest you only find small pieces, the rest being appropriated by unfortunate individuals who have been "skied"—



You had better come about ten—and get in as correspondent of *American*—I sent you a ticket. Mrs. Van Rennsaelaer (or something like it) and lots of other people will be there.

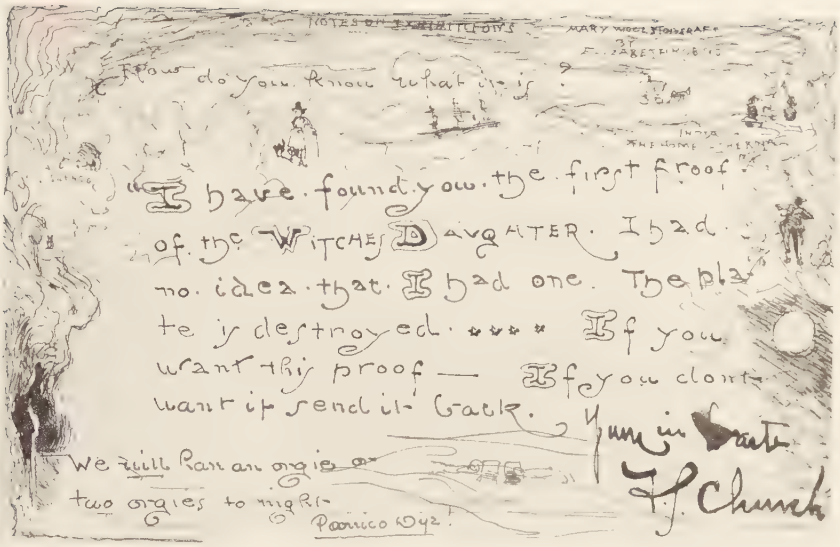
When shall we go to the Romany Rye—please let me know

Yours truly

Joseph Pennell

I was again struck that morning by his curious combination of shyness and self-assurance—shy out of repect to Mrs. Van Rensselaer and leading New York and Philadelphia critics, but too sure he was right not to tell them when they were wrong on a subject of which they knew nothing technically while he knew everything. As secretary and one of the Hanging Committee he was continually being called for and consulted, abused eloquently, he told me, and seldom praised, though he had squandered time, energy and interest on the show, determined to make it come off—as it did. Altogether, I was surprised that he could look out for me, but he made up his mind that it would not be his fault if there was not at least one intelligent article and, thanks to him, I made quite a decent piece of work of it.

The second journey to the South, which would have meant New Orleans with Cable again, the West Indies, and sailing from Kingston for England, fell through. So did a book on the Mississippi, with Mark Twain for author and Osgood for publisher, both Cable and Mark Twain failing at the last moment. Pennell therefore was able to sail on the *Arizona* from New York for Liverpool on January 9, 1883.


How do you know what it is?
I have found you the first proof
of the Witches Daughter. I had
no idea that I had one. The pla-
te is destroyed. **** If you
want this proof — If you don't
want it send it back. Yours in haste
We will Ran an orgie
two orgies to night
Pomico 042
F. S. Church

A SCHEME FOR COLLABORATION SENT WITH AN ETCHING BY F. S. CHURCH

CHAPTER VII

WITH HOWELLS IN TUSCAN CITIES · VENICE (1882–1883)

Pennell stayed long enough in London to see the difficult-to-see editors of the *Portfolio*, *Magazine of Art* and *Art Journal*, and get them to promise at least to look at any drawings he might send from Italy, which they did, and later were asking for more. Social functions could not delay him though he was laden with letters from the *Century* and Leland, and the Englishman is lavish with invitations to any one who comes with the proper introductions. As usual he would not allow amusement to interfere with work and he made straight for Florence and Howells, to whom Cable had written from New Orleans: "Pennell is soon to be with you. You will like him." Pennell was as sure that Howells did not like him, consequently was shy and nervous, and it took them a good part of their stay together in Tuscany to develop an approach to friendship.

He felt far more at home with a little English group, a late offshoot of Pre-Raphaelitism, whom he got to know almost immediately, much to his surprise. He had been hardly any time in Florence before he was on intimate terms with Mary Robinson, to whom a first volume of poems had brought fame and who is now Madame Duclaux; Vernon Lee who had begun to write her learned and flamboyant essays on art; Evelyn Pick-

ering, re-echoing the Brotherhood in her paintings, much later to marry William De Morgan; the tall, splendid Stillmans, mother and two daughters; William Sharp, young and fair, Fiona Macleod not yet invented; Arthur Lemon, handsome, excellent artist, so wise his friends called him God. And Pennell saw much of another and very different set—"the Duveneck Boys", Duveneck off in Venice but four or five of the "Boys" lingering in Florence, meeting of an evening in the little hole of a *trattoria* where, for the sake of good company and cheapness, Pennell dined with them. The story is in his letters to me, the story of the American youth for the first time under the spell of an Italy which was not yet a hopeless prey to tourists and progress—the youth with eyes wide open to beauty, with no ambition save to capture that beauty and imprison it on paper or copper plate, with the keen journalistic instinct that made him discover articles wherever he went, with a tendency to black despair when work did not go right, to bubbling over with high spirits when it did.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Florence. 2.9.83

Miri Deari Die

Ive started about a dozen letters and never gotten anywhere—Had a most *horrible time*—had to run away from London to escape being tied up to dinner tables. Met Gosse—Andrew Lang—and had a jolly letter from Walter Besant and an invitation to a Rabelais Club dinner which came off while I was on the way from Paris to this place—

Got here. Howells is a *howling swell*—very impressive and also very jolly when you can get him alone which isent often—but there are lots of other nice people here. Some of whom Ive met—some havent and want to—and some will meet—and dont care to. Mary

Robinson is here and Vernon Lee, Miss Paget—Mr. Leland knows them and you know of Miss Robinson dont you?—They are "jolly good fellows" even as Howells said unto me before I saw em—and he spake truly—Constance Fennimore Woolston—Miss Fothergill—Ruskin—Ouida—John Hay—sixteen in hand Langhorne—and any numbers of others here—so one may take his pick.

O what do you think I dikked [saw] in Paris—went one night I was there to a new theatre called Eden, good name, magnificent ballet—I dont mean kicking but I never saw such grouping and colour—there was an immense foyer running all around, and all sorts of side shows going—and in one place was Farkos Sandor's twin brother and Caesar's Shadow and Rudi's wraith [the Hungarian Gypsies who had played at the Männerchor]—and we went innocently up—"*Latcho Divvus*". [Good Day] You know the effect. But when I told em I knew Mathis and Farkos—and Herr Joseph they wanted to kiss me—and one of em could speak English and in order to put me through after counting and *chavo* and all that and "*Anglo Romāni Hungaro Romāni*"—you know it—

"Now a you write a me something in English Romany"—so I let off

"*Oh Mandy's yek o lengro*" [one of Leland's Gypsy songs] and they took it in the most solemn manner—oh it was immense.

I havent done anything here yet scarcely—the lovely Firenze is buried under a sea of mud.

Oh Miss Robinson told me such a jolly one about John of Bologna's Devil—and she is so jolly—very much like another "Distinguished authoress" we wot of—here it is. Saint Somebody was tempted in the usual style by the pretty female—(they are awful here) and he seized her by the legs and threw her against a wall and as soon as she hit it—*he* turned into his proper shape—but stuck there and the more the devil tried to get away he "only stuck the harder"—in the course of time he died and became very gamey—so high that even the Florentines couldent stand him—so they scraped down what was left of him—and John of Bologna made a bronze one which was stuck up in his stead and remaineth until this day

Selah

I live here in a Trattoria with a lot of young fellows who are studying art—they have been studying all the way from five to fifteen years and probably will continue to do so all the rest of their lives. But they have certainly got the science of living down to a fine point—when one can live better here on 5 francs a day than 5 dollars at home—I am making most astonishing progress in Italian (I astound the natives at any rate—

Write me care of

M. L. Welsh
U. S. Consul
Florence

Oh how did the Fair work—heard anything—

Channel wasn't worth a cent this time—

But you must get over—we could do such loads of things—I'll tell you at Oxford some day—please do write me a letter for Ive got the blues and the toothache *awful*. Give my love to the *Rye*

Jo Pennell

Care of Maquay Hooker & Co.
Florence—Italy

Miri Dearie Dye—

Ecco!—I have been here a month—and my Florentine work is done—*Ecco*—a pile of manuscripts which will keep me here till summer—Oh I wish I could have gotten you over.

I have met lots of nice people—and nasty ones too—"*Good little Gosh*" is most appropriate for a certain little Britisher—Oh you must come to England next summer—why I can get you any amount of work—Havent the other Miss Robins-on and I already any amount of things on hand and one under way—And you could get them too—What do you think—the William Morris Burne Jones Rossetti crowd has fallen upon me—and I have subsided into a very soft place and a sixfoot most aesthetic individual has been allotted me (she is nice). I dont know how long they can stand me—

I have already finished my Florentine work and go this week to join Howells who is at present in Siena—and we *shall run down to*

Rome for Sunday—They have most lovely old brass lamps here—I was going to get you one—but everyone says one can get much better ones in Venice and I ll send you one from there—

Florence is very ordinary—and excessively English—and I know I shall like the little old towns much better than

—to be continued—

Continuation of last:

Pisa 4.9.83

This is not a volume

Miri Deari

Have your letter but not with me—got it to-day—10th—am off here with the "most finished American novelist"—he'll finish me financially before long.

But I am getting along much better with him, but when a man incidentally mentions that Dickens work "is trash" I feel like stopping the production of American novels.

I am not aesthetic any more—had a row with the six footer and have been dropped by the rest—But what do you think—I am going next week with Miss Robinson and a Miss Paget off to Urbino—in a carriage—a seven days' ride through primitive Italy—whoop—this lovely land—why only a couple of weeks ago—we had two feet of snow—and have had about ten clear days since Ive been here.

Ive done nothing scarcely but look round—havent finished one article yet—Ive told you nothing in this for I have nothing to tell—and it is an awful lot of stuff to wade through—I feel as much at home here as in America saving the language—but I shall come home as soon as the Italian work is done and then come back in the spring—I have more work on hand here in Italy for *Cassells'*, *The Art Journal* and *The Portfolio*—and they all asked me to do it—I am sure that over here I could get you all the work you could do, so pack up in the summer (in a small hand bag) and come—

I dont do half the work I did at home but hope I shall do—what I do—better—But the country is overpowering—everything is worth doing and you cant touch it. If I could only live in three or four places I know of *forever* I should be satisfied—Its awful to think

you never can begin these things—Do write me a long one—I get lots of letters but not like yours.

Arrivedello (!)

or something like it

Jo Pennell

Pisa 4.10.1883

Miri Dearie Die

Have yours of March 5—hope there are some more on the way and that in the course of time I *may* get them—I have written you sever-ial times. I have been looking in vain for "rose red lilies"—They do not usually bust up through a foot and a half of snow in this part of the world—When you think of my delightful surroundings—yes—only the other day—it took a fire and three *scaldini* to keep me from perishing with cold—N.B. a *scaldino* —is an infernal machine of clay—filled with hot charcoal with which one can barely keep from freezing—Ough—no more Italian winters for me—the loveliness is yet to come—saving the people—why this week I have been running around with Howells—yesterday we started from here—and drove across the country to Lucca. I am getting along very much better with him than I did at first—and if he wasent going to Venice next week—I would probably fall desperately in love with him—as I did with Cable—But that ride over the flat Compagna, with Pisa silhouetted behind us, up into the narrow passes and through jolly old towns each one of which I could spend a lifetime in—but we didn't stop—Still this is the way to see Italy—and what do you think I intend doing next week—why two good and *proper* English girls Miss Robinson (I wish it was Robins) and Vernon Lee have asked me to go with them for a week starting from Siena—and riding to Urbino—and going off miles from any railroad—or intelligent tourist—into untouched and primitive Italy—but one can find that five miles from Florence—still will it not be lovely and I wish you were to fill the other seat—or rather that there wasent any one else—Have just seen the great Florentine festival at which all Florence goes to the *Duomo* and sets off a lot of fireworks and if everything goes well—they are sure of a good time

coming in the near future—but the fireworks only fizzed which—and not my laziness—accounts for scarcely any work being done.

I dont believe in your predictions about six years *but* I believe and know we shall have another tramp to Bartram's next November.

Oh I met some more Roms, I really believe, but though I tried them in all sorts of *Jibs* "*no capisco*" was all I could get out of them —ask the Rye—for the Italian *Sarishan!*

Confound the prim and proper heads of those fellows high up in Union Square. I hope you sent the Country Fair right off to *Harper*. I see the Clowns have come forth in *The Atlantic*—Ive seen Stenterello; do you know him—he is the Florentine gentleman and he carries on in about the same manner as "Sammy of Posen"—He is introduced always in *the same dress* in any play from the time of Caesar until this present—When the snow is off the hills Ill get you a four leaf clover. But Ill look tomorrow in the Campo Santo—and certainly it will be *Kushto* to find one growing in that holy ground brought from Jerusalem.

When I am in Florence I do not live in a "*Grand Hotel Royal Continental de la Paix con Ascenseur Hydraulic*" as the sign on the omnibus has it—but in a wee *trattoria*—and we dine—that is six artistic fellows—two Britishers—and one American doctor who would make you wild. He speaks Persian and Hindu—and has just come back from the other side of the Sahara—and—the yarns he spins—

San Gimignano. 4.26.82

Miri Dearie Die,

I have been—and gone—and done it—with Miss Robinson—I mean I have actually taken her and Miss Paget—or rather they have taken me—from Florence to Urbino and back—and nothing serious has come of it. At least nothing save getting an article or two out of *The Art Journal*.

We climbed up into Perugia—most lovely old place—on a hilltop not far from Lake Thrasymene. Then went to Assisi with its wonderful old churches—and on up to Urbino way high among the mountains, a whole day's journey, with three horses and two oxen—and two men to yell at the five—and this is what I have been wanting—a long ride in a carriage through Italy. Then we came down by

Rimini which is something more than a name and contains some most wonderful decorative works, to perpetuate the memory of Francesca and certain gentlemen—a hard lot—but the decorative things are most wonderful—Then back to Florence again and I came off here—while, alack, alas, Miss Robinson has gone back to England—am so broke up over it—that I have had the rheumatism—She is so jolly—I cant say more than that—She is much like another Miss Robins-on—and she has asked me to visit the family in London. Howell's description of her is that she is a jolly good fellow—

But cant you be gotten over some way and you could—I am sure of it—do as well as she does—by booming up old pictures—which is what every one—save yours truly—does—

This place is also on a mountain top and I came up here for Hamerton—who has been saying all sorts of things about me. . . . It is one of the old strongholds on the way from Siena to Florence and the only town which still retains its towers—Oh the lovely

lovely place. And see the *Kushto Bak* Ive found you growing way on the top of a mountain—and the clover has a lovely red flower—crimson or scarlet—has it faded? Now our *Kushto* must return—have to yet *dik* a *Rom?* I havent seen the sign of one—Did I tell you how I tried one in a *café*—at least I am sure she had "*Romany Rat*"—but she wouldent *rakker*—I had a most glorious walk along a hilltop into the sunset to-night—and he finally lost himself in a cypress grove—Oh how glorious it was—this summer I suppose there will

be no walks—but wait—we shall have more. I am not working very much—drinking in—though I believe if I should stay here I wouldent do anything—but look at this lovely land—for it is too beautiful to touch—and you cant do it—I feel utterly unable to do anything—and there is so much to do—I still intend to come home in the fall—

Howells has gone to Venice where I shall probably join him when I finish these things, and do nothing but loaf industriously. My Italian is flourishing though I havent studied a bit—pick everything up—and in consequence am acquiring about six different ways of pronouncing each word I know—It is quite well to know that *questa casa* is in Florence pronounced "*huesta hausa*—and when you are in Bologna never say *cane* but *an* as the people of that village have adopted the expedient of not only dropping the termination but the beginning of every word—hog Latin is nothing to it—I am awful tired and cant spin any more and post goes away to morrow so

Buona Sera

Jo Pennell

Address still in Florence—Care Maquay and Hooker

Florence. 5.5.83

I hope you can
wade through this
A clerk at the P.O.
thought it Russian

Miri Kamli Pen

I'm about done with Florence. Hope to finish this week then for Venezia—as soon as I can—and then home in the fall for another glimpse of our old Bartram house which your crocus dont seem to belong to—You should have sent some autumn leaves—but has not *Kushto Bak* already come to you in some form from those clovers from San Gim—I came down from that lovely old pile last week—And am here in lovely swell Florence—Miss Robinson has gone back to London—She is only twenty-six—and not at all ashamed of letting people know it—or calling spades legs—I beg your pardon, but I am rapidly being corrupted by proper English girls—not the

six foot *dam*sel—as another English aesthete called her—fact—Apropos of the middle of that last sentence we have the most gorgeous ballet now in progress—called *Sulla o il Spada di Wodan*—according to it Wodan is an intimate friend of pirates—Norseman—fairies—and lives in a most gorgeous Egyptian palace—which may be a fact for you if you dont know it—But the ballet is the most wonderful thing you can imagine—lasts three hours. No Romanies are here—I ve looked and looked but never one have I *dikked*—

I only wish the old house at Chestnut Hill was somewhat nearer the Riva in Venice where my summer will probably be spent. I want to go up in about three weeks—and struggle with some copper plates as big as barn doors—and will show you the result in the autumn—

Oh did I tell you that in the small towns in the summer to this day—they have plays gotten up by the *contadini* just like those of the Middle Ages and I shall try to see some when I go up to Lucca—and will let you know about them, and yet Italy is spoiled—*Kek!* nowhere outside the large and correct towns.

Howells has betaken himself to Venice and now that he has gone I find I liked him—or maybe it was the fascinating daughter—and did I tell you I had met Constance Fennimore Woolston (?)—"Old Wooly" as Howells calls her—she isent old but charmingly deaf in one ear—so that you must always think and get on her right side—I believe I must have done this as she wants me to come and see her in Venice—

Oh the most crushing thing happened at Assisi—scene

at dinner—we Misses Robinson and Paget and I—we want some wine —*cameriere!—cameriere!!* no waiter—sudden anvil chorus on glasses— Horror of dowagers at other table—as waiter appears dowager remarks—*There* Is a bell—Miss Robinson *is* THERE? in her mildest—collapse of dowager friend. You should have seen that canny little thing.

J. A. Symonds has written a new book called Italian Byeways which you should see.

I dont know if you want a guide book letter—if you do you wont get it—Ill send you a Baedeker if so, as it would be less trouble and I dont know anything of pictures for when I go off with Miss Robinson to a gallery while she studies Italian art I learn Italian—in consequence I can swear most beautifully—the next time a lame organist opens up under your window—remark *Accidenti Via*—ac cidenti si—via-a-a-a-a—and observe the effect—it merely means—may all sorts of accidents befall you—but is most effectual—

I have made no sketches scarcely—as I have found out *that* it is useless to go to work and draw recklessly here—everything is picturesque—and unless it is of some value—I mean has something connected with it (historically or otherwise) or you want it for some definite purpose you are losing time—the consequence is I have absorbed millions of old houses and produced about twenty copper plates. I am trying to work an article for you—making notes—

Good Bye

Jo Pennell

Firenze 21.5.1883

Miri Kamli

Yesterday came yours of May 7th—and with it has come *Primavera* and you cant imagine how lovely it is—Swinburne, Browning—Rogers—any or all of them cant tell you—Oh *Miri Dye*—if you could only see it now—But some day—But some day—and that "someday" come—No sudden bursting into leaf and flower but slowly gradually—so slowly that you scarcely notice it—till some morning you will find the whole country is changed. I thought I knew something of roses from last year at New Orleans—but *miri Die*—think of seven miles of rose crowned hills from Florence to Fiesole—up and up all the way to Boccaccio's Villa by old towns, up to the lovely old place high on its hill looking down on Florence and the Arno—

And the vines are out too and for miles you ride through festooned arches for the vines hang from tree to tree and the whole lovely land seems decked for a *festa*—but you must *see* it—even W.D.H. said the other day "I cant describe it" and he doesn't use that expression frequently—By the way he was commanded to visit the Crown Princess of Germany at Venice and like a good little man he went.

I share your fright of "Vernon Lee". She—(or he as she is frequently called) is quite overpowering especially when one has to wade through a hundred pages of Mss. written in This Style
I havent *dikked* a *Rom*—though yesterday when out in a very proper style I saw some *chals* a "peeling" of themselves and coming out as tumblers and I wanted to run after them oh so much. But I had on a most proper *Inglese* suit and I couldent—

But next week I am to be envied—just think of it—for the first time

Venezia

in June,

Oh I am too lucky and all alone too—and to-day I got a letter asking me if I would go to St. Petersburg and Constantinople.

(Later)

Have been for a tramp to-night on the Lung Arno—by the Ponte Vecchio piling up in the moonlight—under the Loggia of the Uffizi

with the tower of the Bargello seeming to sail in the air—with Cellini's Perseus silhouetted against the Piazza—light as day—oh it is so lovely here—though really it is no more so—than those nights last year at Chestnut Hill—oh do you remember the night you told me of John Inglesant—well the place where he looks down upon the country from is Urbino—and the description of vine clad hills and all that sort of thing is most wonderfully inappropriate as the country looks like a map with scarcely a tree in it. But it was the correct Italy last night—all around beautiful young gentlemen humming wailing and strumming—"the last rose of summer"

—we are having a siege of Martha—in all sorts of manners—

But for all this beauty I love the Bartram place as much as ever—and you only break me all up by telling me of it. Thanks for wanting me—for that walk we *will* go this fall—After all this beauty isent new—you cant find new things and hundreds of other greater and nobler men have seen and written and drawn it all—Oh it is pleasant to think you have some new place and then turn round and discover two or three other fellows at work on the same thing—

Hasent the *Kushto bak* come from those four-leaved clovers I sent you from San Gimignano—

The waiter insists on putting out the light, So

A riverderla
Miri pen
Pennell

Care of S. & A. Blumenthal
VENEZIA 6.13.83

Miri Kamli Pen

Oh what an awful sell it is—coming in on a long bridge—and not from Mestre in a gondola—*à la* Ruskin (see somewhere in *Stones of Venice*)—and that beastly black hearse to get into—which rocks like a hammock (I hate hammocks) and smelly canals—and howling women and St. Mark's all polished up and looking like a new town house—and a fellow with a swelled head—those were my first impressions of Venice—and I carried them for several days, voting

myself and not the place a sell—and the next morning when I go out nothing but *pittori—pittori*—almost as many as the pieces of the ugly old red brick washed-out marble that the palace is built of—In short another attack of blues. But one morning I woke up and it all came—lovely—lovely light and everything—moonlight in the evening (over my right shoulder). By the way I went the first night with a great green *gorgio*—who calls a boat—a gandler—to *shoon* [hear] some Hungarian Romany *chals*—but—I was so very very blue I dident open my mouth to them—and the next day they *hatched apre*—[were up and gone.]

But now I have a gondola and a faithful creature who shrieks in unknown tongues whenever a gentleman in an upper window empties a pan of pea pods upon my head—as fell out the other day—and he rows me—lolling back in cushions—through rippling quivering blue and gold kissed (now aint that pretty?) At least Ive a man and a gondola for a few francs a day. Just read a little of Howell's *Venetian Life*—and in one place he says a certain good Venetian tells a friend "As for my son *e in piazza*"—and to be in *piazza* on a June evening is not to be described—only let me say we all go there to drink coffee—we go when it rains to be dry—when hot to be cool—and—we all do it all the time—and here is the place to learn to loaf and invite one's soul—But you will see it all before long—

(Now isent that rot)

That description of Miss Robinson is good—And when she greets you in the morning with "Hello" and seems to sail towards you like a little Botticelli figure, if you are a great clumsy lout like me you dont know what to do with yourself—and then she tells you in such a charming way of something she has just seen—I dont wonder she was a shining and a burning light among the Rossetti set. She told me a good thing about Oscar—poor Oscar—who has just likened the moon "to a yellow seal upon a blue envelope"—see new book beginning to appear—Oscar asked her what he should do to escape the world and his hosts of followers—and the *Mademoiselle* said "Go to Paris". Collapse of the incarnation of beauty (a fact)

I went to the little town but dident see any *Contadini* plays—as the one which was to have been played was postponed until the summer —But saw a real old-fashioned *festa*—down on my knees with my hat off sketching with all my might—and I scribbled a lot in the Mark Twain style—I may inflict it on you—Shall I?

There is a marionette theatre here that I want much to see, with jolly devils and things, but it hasent "begun to begin"—Yesterday being a *festa* of somebody went over the Grand Canal most properly on a bridge of boats in company with many *forestieri* and a few natives—huge sell—

I dont know how long I shall stay here as Hamerton has just accepted an article for *The Portfolio* on San Gimignano and I am going to try to get something out of him on this place—Then Edinburgh, Rugby, Eton—and Bartram's—

Frank Stockton is here and I may muster up courage enough to go and see the old man and Pomona but dont know. There is so much stuff in this that Ill stop and not bore you any longer—isent this jolly paper—Ive laid in a stock—real old Venetian hand made —want some? Its awful cheap—

Me shom
Tuti's pal
Jo Pennell

[Drawing]

12 P.M.
Venice 6.26.1883

Miri Dearie Dye—I feared the last had been too much—for it has been three weeks since a letter for *Mrs.* Joseph Pennell has turned up —at least the creature with a Sammy of Posen expression always wants to know if *that* is for me—*o la sua moglie*—I believe that's what he gets off—

But I have gotten over my home sickness for Florence—and the beauty of this place has come to me—I cant tell you of it—think of this morning in an old court yard—where nothing stirred but the great leaves of a geranium and the green eyes of a lone cat who

followed all my movements with more wonder than a lone native—and then this afternoon—at the foot of some old stairs like these

All marble against a glorious drapery of grape and fig leaves thrown over an old wall stained—over and over—year after year—with a pale pink wash crumbling and falling in a thousand tints all over it—then at the foot the heads of three doges in the horned bonnet—the fellow who did that bit of carving probably got his name in the *bocca di leone*—and then a glorious old open work iron gate through which a dusty miller passed to and fro from his mill where he looked after his meal of *maccaroni*—to his water gate where he looked after and shouted to all the people within reach of his lungs—and the horrible yells which an Italian in the course of an ordinary conversation can manage to bring in are fearful and wonderful—

Then as I came slowly home by San Giovanni e Paolo—I heard the usual wheezing old organ and pulled aside that mysterious green flapping curtain, as dirty as the one in front of any *tan* [Gypsy tent]—and went in and sat in the Twilight just before Titian's Peter Martyr while some men who really could sing when they were not laughing—and cracking jokes for the benefit of the congregation around them—followed the priests through one of those glorious old Latin hymns—and there came a lovely rosy light through the windows—and the fat shuffling priests and stumpy soldiers and old women—and young Saint Johns of boys all faded away and I knew where Dante got that picture of the glory of painted windows—dont you know it—I cant tell or make you feel it—you must see it some time—then out into the old square where that finest equestrian statue in

the world stands—and home lazily and dreamily loafing on cushions of *my gondola*—dont you forget that—and into the lagoon where the islands, each with a little *Campanile*, float in the air as no other islands float, and, dim and misty—way behind them is Padova and the Euganean Hills—Oh Miri Pen, every other young idiot has been through it I suppose but I expect every day to wake from this dream of a perfect June—and even you will "gush and go on"—you cant help it you cant—you cant—you cant—and you ought not to—though I hope not over Bridges of Sighs and Grand Canals—But over this lovely perfect perfect life which *is* worth living and which the people here know not of themselves. And bless the Lord the Philistine and Cook's Tourist cant bring along with their coupon—

No there is none of that blue blue business, only a faint whity washed-out heat-laden sky which shimmers and glitters and falls down into the pale blue water and the islands float up and down between—And the sunsets are not golden—but the sun goes down red and hot behind the mountains—but he has an awful long day of it here—No dont wish to be a Gypsy—only to live in an old palace looking out over the lagoon and in the morning and in the afternoon to be rowed up and down—up and down—these endless ever changing streets—and in the evening to be "*in piazza*" and see the moon come out of the lake and the ghostly gondolier walking on the water—and may you not hear the blissful Forestieri howl John Brown's Body leaving off one word at a time—I cant do anything but write rot and sickly sentiment but I only want to have you here on a June evening—and then hear *you* go on—

I am going to do an article I think with Miss A. Mary F. Robinson on some decorative work we saw in the spring—at least I have had a letter from Comyns Carr on the subject—He is to be the Editor of a new illustrated magazine that Macmillan will bring out in the fall and which (or Comyns Carr) I am going to impress with the necessity of your writing and my scribbling something for the edification of the ignorant British Public about *your* side of the Pond—

I am glad to know you regard Sunday as a day of rest—though I had a faint idea or rather recollection of a certain *bella tosa* who always had so much work to do on that day she never scarcely had

time for anything else, particularly tramps. But though I agree with both of you about bringing children or allowing them to be "brought up religiously and guardedly" (that's good Quaker) I dont think either of you have had much practical experience and I think the result will be something similar to that in this country—where the Government has taken the Church from the people—and they believe in nothing and hope for nothing and doubt everything and trust no one save the do'ske' of the Forestieri.

This country is rotten and the people know it—They hate the priests and, save in the country defile the churches and until they die care for nothing and no one—everyone says the suppression of the churches and monasteries was bad—bad—and has taken much of the simplicity out of the Italian's life. They—the Government—have taken away his Church and given him nothing save a band of music Sunday night here and there. They have carted off the Della Robbia reliefs which he could see every day for nothing—and which he loved, and hid them in Museums with a million and one other things, where he may find them if he pays a franc to get in—But you should see the Museums on free days, *festas* usually, and see the crowd there—how the poor people love these things—and you should also see that instead of imitating his betters (?) and reading the *Diavolo Rosso* the Venetian gondolier and the Tuscan peasant is content with his little pocket Tasso or Dante and you should see the crowd the solemn old street reader gathers when he drones out "*Le Rime*"

—Rot again—

I rather fear that Lovel's idea is rather exploité (?) (I stole that somewhere) and that the—love in a cottage business is played out—But it is better that than the utter heedlessness of morals and manners and law and duty which prevails here at present—No I havent yet been fascinated by any Italian beauties because all you see outside the stout duena-guarded windows of the gondolas are rather too cheap for me—The life of a woman is something fearful here utterly dependent, losing her character almost if she goes out of doors alone—and all owing to those villanously handsome brutes of men—Do write and tell me if you survive this.

Jo Pennell

CHAPTER VIII

SCOTLAND, ENGLAND, HOME ENGAGEMENT · MARRIAGE (1883–1884)

By July his *Century* work, Howell's "Florentine Mosaic", was finished. In addition, he managed to send to London illustrations for three articles by Vernon Lee: "The Youth of Raphael", published in the *Art Journal*, "North Tuscan Cities" in the *Magazine of Art*, "San Gimignano of Many Towers" in the *Portfolio*. In Venice he made not only a series of etchings but drawings to illustrate three articles on "The Artist in Venice" by Julia Cartwright, this the beginning of a long and pleasant association with Seeley, the publisher of the *Portfolio*. He could start north with an easy conscience. He had put his best into his etchings and he knew they were good. Editors had been too far away to interrupt, and no societies had claimed his time. Everywhere were subjects after his heart. Florence gave him her bridges, old market place, streets of mystery shut in by "the skyscrapers of the Medici." In Pistoia he found the old "Piazza" with the crumbling "Palazzo Publico"; in San Gimignano, the towers; in Pisa, "The Swing of the Arno"; in Siena, the beautiful vistas of the hilly town dominated by the Cathedral and La Mangia; in Leghorn, "The Landing Place"; in Urbino, the Ducal City "standing on its great architectural foundations"; in

Venice, countless canals and doorways and churches and palaces, but never one that somebody had not discovered before him. From Florence he wrote to Koehler, "If I could only live five hundred years and always do decent things—now I feel simply crushed by the amount of material around me." Koehler seemed to think the "Ponte Vecchio" showed him not so crushed after all and called him, on the strength of it, "A sort of Philadelphia Méryon." In the end he etched more plates than were commissioned by the *Century*, but that was his way. His joy was in studying and recording the world's beauty, not in the profit the record brought him. He was not a dealer in groceries or dry goods to grudge a fraction overweight.

In the plates of the Italian Series, as in everything he had done and was yet to do, he used his eyes and selected his points of view for himself, though in Italy his subjects had been for generations the common property of artists. He was as personal in his technique. That he owed much to Whistler, he was the first to admit: "Though I never studied under Whistler—never was his pupil—he is and always will be my master." But to study the master is not necessarily to copy him. Nothing could be less like Whistler's etchings than the prints of the Italian Series. Pennell had his own manner of seeing the pattern woven by vivid light and deep shadow, of translating brilliant colour into brilliant black and white; he had his own line to express the sweeping lines of a city landscape, to render the effects that haunted him until they were on his plate, bitten and printed. The series was extraordinary for a youth who had only the Philadelphia and New Orleans plates

to his credit, who had never been in Italy before, whose knowledge of the south was limited to one winter in New Orleans. The *Century* editors had good reason to praise him. Letters of appreciation came from every department. Gilder, seldom apt to honour illustrators with a letter, added his tribute. "You have covered yourself with glory by these etchings of Florence, etc.", he wrote. "Accept my congratulations."

In July Pennell left Venice for Edinburgh. The contrast was bewildering, incredible. But the Venetian sunlight, not yet washed out of his eyes, could not blind him to the picturesqueness of the sombre northern town with the stern castle on the hill, the dark wynds, the tall grim houses, the lowering skies and thick grey mist. Andrew Lang wrote the article, "Edinboro Old Town", published six months later in the *Century* for January, 1884. The two got on well together despite the blunder made by Andrew "with the brindled hair." Instead of his letter of introduction to a friend in Edinburgh, he gave Pennell his personal letter in which he described the artist's accent as wonderful. Pennell's comment was: "Accent, indeed. If any one had a more perfect Oxford accent than Andrew Lang, with a bit of Scotch burr thrown in, I never heard it. And the squeaking scream in which he talked beat any Middle West schoolma'am's cackle." He sent the letter back to Lang, saying he thought there had been a mistake. Lang was irritated—it is always irritating to be found out. When they met again a year or so later, Lang said he had completely forgotten what Pennell wrote but had never forgiven it. However, they remained good friends, collaborated in other articles, and afterwards in London

Mrs. Lang would ask us to dinner and her receptions. Lang who, judging from the amount of work he turned out, was never idle, had a pose of languor, also of superciliousness, of the University superiority that went with the University accent. But he was delightful to look at, if not to talk to.

Wash seemed the appropriate medium in Edinburgh, and Pennell was right. Pen and ink could not have rendered so truthfully and emotionally the city of sadness and shadow. "Bang up," was Fraser's compliment to the drawings. Next came a *Harper* commission in Sheffield; then to Dublin, the article by Edward Dowden, and to Rugby for the *Century;* and then for himself, "From Coventry to Chester on Wheels," the wheels belonging to that lop-sided tricycle known as a Coventry Rotary. The English Cathedrals had not been touched and it was late in the season to begin an outdoor series of twelve articles in England. He decided to go home and return in the spring, a wise decision which his family could not understand. They disapproved of his fashion of "doing Europe." "Does thee not intend to spend a few days in Switzerland?"—"Does thee not mean to go down the Rhine?"—"I hope that thee takes time to go around and see all the places of interest where thee visits"—his father and Aunt Martha kept writing. Travelling to see places was, I gather from the voluminous family correspondence, the Friends' chief excitement and not to see Switzerland and the Rhine, the correct sights of the period, was, for one who had the chance, something of a disgrace. But Pennell travelled, not as a tourist, but an artist with definite work to do and neither time nor inclination for sight-

Germantown 10 4 1883

Dear Miss Robins

There is a train at Eleven — and I'll be at your house at about ten thirty

But if you say so, I'll come earlier as there will probably be a special at ten or half past — but the regular train starts at Eleven

Wait for Ellen Terry —
I've got a letter from —
the most furnished novelist
that America now possesses

I shall you
Yours truly
Jo Russell

AN INVITATION TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

seeing. From Chester, where his tricycle ride ended, he went on to Liverpool and was back in Philadelphia early in October.

He was in his very best form, full of what he had seen, what he had done, what he had felt, what was to come of it. His energy was irresistible. It seemed to catch one up and carry one along with him, despite one's natural indolence. Again, he was eager to collaborate with me in his hours of work, eager to have me as a companion in his hours of play. Bartram's had to be revisited to make sure that it was not less lovely because Italian villas and gardens were so fair. The Wissahickon and the Cresheim had again to be explored for proof that absence and memory had not exaggerated their charm. At one moment he was finding work for me to do; the next, amusements we could share. Plans for both are in a letter he wrote in December on the beautiful old paper he was already collecting.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Germantown 12.16.1883

Miri Dearie Dye

Behold the last piece of
La Bella Venezia
paper—

I must go back

for some more.

Ive a letter from the *Wide Awake* man—and he "counts upon me" to do the Child Life article and Ive assured him that you can do it most beautifully—so when the proofs of drawings come we can go at it—at least I will make notes for you.

And the American etchings book is selling immensely and "the papers praise it to the skies"—writes the Editor—"and your plate" (e.g. mine) taffy—taffy—taffy—So to celebrate this we will go to

see Wyndham—for I believe we've been *matto* [which is Gypsy for drunk, but here, might be translated "exalted"] long enough—and want a good laugh—when shall we go—let me have some time to get tickets so we needent have to make another ascension—any night but Wednesday. I did not go to see thee knows who.

Thy

Pal

Our collaboration was a trifle less active. A big commission had at last come my way and I was writing my first book, "The Life of Mary Wollstonecraft", while I was anxious to keep up with the *Atlantic*, in which I had first seen myself in print. He approved, he helped me with wise counsel. What he did not approve was my connection with the Manual Art Classes which Leland, backed by the School Board, had established in connection with the Public Schools of Philadelphia, appointing me his secretary. My uncle believed, and was not alone in believing, that something was wrong with the system of public education and he saw the remedy in some sort of light manual work for the pupils, preferably the "Minor Arts." It was out of this school that the Art Club to which Pennell objected, had grown. He had nothing save admiration for Leland as a literary man but thought him an amateur as teacher of art and, besides, was sure he had hit on the wrong assistant. Pennell would have suggested his fellow student, H. F. Stratton. What he felt keenly he was always under that "weighty obligation" to say forcibly and, after a struggle for politeness sake, a day came when he could restrain himself no longer. Afterwards, he wrote me an apology, an admirable exposition of the attitude that was his in these matters from the beginning until the end. His one standard throughout his life was the highest.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Dye Dear—I am afraid (In fact I know) I said a lot of savage things about the School and Club yesterday—and I wish I'd kept my mouth shut but these things have been on the point of tumbling out for near two years.

This is what I ought to have said and dident—

That Stratton is an original fellow who if he only gets pushed enough will make his mark some day—and *that Club* could do it for him—here, in this city, he will never push himself But though he is heart and soul in his work—I doubt very much if he could teach as well as the other one who is without doubt a teacher—*and nothing more*—who knows—that every one *can not* do little or great original work but who can make them believe that they can—This is probably more than Stratton could do

Do you understand?

One works for love

And the other for cash

One wants his pupils to do big things—and they dont

And the other makes them believe that they do big things and they dont

But the latter will always be the successful teacher because he pleases those who never can do much—and I will say for him when he sees that a person can do something, he is honest enough to send them out of his reach—if they paint—for example—to the Academy—So I really dont see what better you can do—I know all this is none of my business—and I have no business to lecture you in this style—But I dont know if all art and life and everything else, isent a fraud and a snare and a sham

Only

I know

That we will hear Nilsson and Campanini in

Faust

Monday week

"Oh that night and that hour."

His objection did not extend to my writing about art when he could do the coaching. Thanks to him, I became a fully accredited art critic on not only the *American* but the *Press*. When an important exhibition opened in New York we would run over together, he would guide me through the gallery to such good purpose that, on a Saturday or a Wednesday, we could take in the opera or theatre after lunch and, coming back in the train, I would write away for dear life, he at my elbow in case of need, and my article would get to the office in time to appear in the next morning's paper. The one return he asked—and the *Century* made a commission of it—was that I should write up the notes of his tricycle ride in England, his drawings having been accepted but not his text. That was the editor's mistake. His writing in those days might be a trifle jumpy—"not coherent, not consecutive enough", was the editorial criticism—but it abounded in life and character. I did what he asked, knowing that he should have done it himself, and "From Coventry to Chester on Wheels" came out the following September, unsigned. The editors may have wanted to reserve him for things nobody else could do. Now he was again within call, they did not spare him. If they gave him worthwhile commissions, they did not let him off from hack work. They were forever asking him to do an odd drawing or two, though it might involve a long tiresome journey, and they were so decent about the big things that he could not refuse the little. It was not out of purely disinterested friendship that Fraser wrote him while he was in Italy: "Every now and then, even in the short time that has elapsed since you left, we have sighed for you".

Early in 1884 they asked him as a special favour to run down to Washington, another illustrator having failed them, so that the magazine found itself in a tight place. It happened that I was called to Baltimore for a day and to Washington for another, and we planned to make the journey together as far as Baltimore and together return from Washington. In the Pullman he began at once on a favourite subject—the beauty of Italy, the absolute necessity of my spending the following summer there. He would get me articles to do that would pay my way. If prudish Philadelphia would stand our journeys to New York and Baltimore, why wouldn't they stand a journey to Italy? In his determination to take me there, we had not got much beyond Wilmington when, probably seeing no alternative, he suggested a life partnership which would enable us henceforward to share not simply Italy's, but the world's beauty, at no risk of criticism or gossip. And, with his genius for success, he succeeded in settling the matter.

One letter referring to this new adventure has come into my hands. My brother, Edward Robins, trying his journalistic luck in Kansas City, wrote to congratulate him. This was the acknowledgment:

TO MR. EDWARD ROBINS

Germantown
February 6 1882

My dear Ned,

Thanks for your kind letter—you *think* I have "got the dearest girl that ever lived"—well, I *know* it—and so we will all of us be good pals.

But it takes something of this sort to find ones friends, and I am happy to still be able to count on you—for I really dont know how

I got her—or why you should like my running off with her—But I do think I should accept and ask for any amount of congratulations for "my bravery"—as she puts it—She could have written this more sensibly—I've been *matto* for the last two weeks and probably shall be for the rest of my days.

Yours Several Inches Taller
Pennell

The immediate change this new plan caused in our lives was the necessity for both of us to prepare for the summer's journey. He began to think out articles he could do with me, in addition to the English Cathedrals he was to do with Mrs. Van Rensselaer. We were to sail in June. But the *Century* spared him small leisure for thinking. He was oftener out than in Philadelphia. After Washington it was Bessemer and an article with Professor Langley. "From the very beginning I have cared for the Wonder of Work," he wrote in his Introduction to his book with that title; "from the time I built cities of blocks and sailed models of ships across the floor in my father's office." As a boy he drew the old mills in Germantown. An oil refinery was one of his subjects in his first *Century* article, "In the Mash." He twice etched the scaffolding on Philadelphia's public buildings. In 1881 he offered—without success—an etching of a coal breaker to Cassell's for the "Works of the American Etchers." They preferred his "Ponte Vecchio." In 1884 he proposed to them a book about what Koehler called "Picturesque Aspects. . . . . oil docks, tumble-down shanties, smoke stacks and sich like", but it did not appeal to an editor who knew the danger of originality in an art speculation. One scheme that developed out of this scorned suggestion was what

we called "our picturesque article." It was to deal with the picturesqueness of railroads, shipping, scaffolding, factories, the great things of an industrial, manufacturing, steam-and-electricity age. When he was at home we wandered through town and suburbs hunting up subjects, he with a sketchbook, I with a notebook. He told me about Howells' method of work, continually taking notes, in railroad cars, in carriages, on foot, so that the wonder was he found time to look at things to make his notes about. Mary Robinson and Vernon Lee were as indefatigable as Hamerton had been before them, their notebooks forever in their hands. If I mastered their method, I hoped I might achieve their distinction. From Bessemer he wrote me, "Ive seen such stunning things for our Picturesque article

An Oil Refinery
A Forge
A brick yard.

And Ive made a pile of notes for *tute* [you] and to-night I am going down first to the steel works to see the blast."

After Bessemer, his time was divided between Atlantic City where his father, never entirely recovered from his illness in 1882, was spending the winter, and Philadelphia where I was and where innumerable interests held him. Cable came to lecture and sing his Creole songs and Pennell could not rest until he had secured for him an enthusiastic welcome at the Penn Club, a smaller reception at the house of the poet Francis Howard Williams, and, best of all, little meetings with us, for he loved Cable and was determined I should too. Nor could we miss Matthew Arnold when he

lectured—a frigid affair. And English actors, passing through, had to be seen. But in March the *Century* interrupted, as was its way, summoning him to New York to make architectural drawings for Stanford White—"beautiful and satisfactory" drawings the firm pronounced them—he had had some experience of the kind in Philadelphia for Theophilus Chandler. And in April the *Century* carried him still farther away, to Washington, to Richmond, to the battle-fields of Virginia—Johnson and Buel his companions at the start, Drake at the end. They were about to launch their War Series, of which Colonel Boteler's article, secured by Pennell, was practically the first. Of the editorial progress in the South he kept me posted in daily bulletins.

TO ELIZABETH ROBINS

Exchange Hotel
Fredericksburg, Va. 4.15.1884

"I am tired"—Chorus by Buel Johnson and I "— the ink", solo by little B. Tired because we had to talk for two hours to such a *dinelo* [fool] in a pack of *dinelos* and because we have had a glorious day of eighteen hours—been over battle fields—heard Generals of both sides describing fights and making history—Came down this morning and have been going ever since—But I am too tired of coming, going round this way and wont it be a blessing to rest in Italy—yes we will rest and never do any more of this tearing work—And to-night I tried so hard to flirt with such a pretty pink girl—and we, B. and I, tempted her with ice-cream, water, lemonade and papers but she resisted.

Exchange Hotel
Fredericksburg, Va—

Miri Dearie Dye. But I have had such a good day—all over the battle field of Salem Church Chancellorsville and the Wilderness (you see

how thoroughly I am up though I dident know anything about them before this morning) and then the Commanders on each side fought their battles again—and such graphic descriptions as some of them gave—Think of hearing of the death of Stonewall Jackson from the lips of the men who carried him off the field and nursed him as long as he lived—or the story of the taking of an earthwork by the man who led the charge—But how they fought and squabbled over details—There were some good stories told too—one man wanted to point out that if men fighting for the right came in contact with those upholding the wrong the right should triumph. So he illustrated it this way. Suppose Cromwell's Ironsides should encounter Napoleon's Old Guard—why the Old Guard would have no show against them—"well", put in another old boy, "you certainly should put Voltaire standing at the end of the line and sneering at the principles of both parties"—and more of that sort and more of other sorts——To-morrow we are going to Spottsylvania Court House—the next days I shall stay in Washington—Wednesday go to Mt. Vernon

Williamsburg, of all these places, made the deepest impression on him. From Old Point Comfort he sent the description of his day there with Drake.

Charming is the town, the Church, a bit of England—and in it tablets—one I love to the "Confederate Dead Who Died for Us". A long long street and the quaintest weather stained houses—all windows covered with vines—bits of backyards, little shop windows —mule team darkies. And peace—and quiet over all. And the cullud pusson who furnished us with *hereafter* composed of peaches and sponge cake—and when we gave him ten cents said he would put up a better job on us—and the drive out to old Fort McGruder and the road with its ox teams right through it—and the embrasures for cannon full of apple trees in bloom—and the old town in the twilight of this perfect spring day—how I wish we could come here in June. Is it too far? for this is the spot—

The next letter from Old Point Comfort was full of its beauty and charm: "Oh such a lovely day——Way off down the roads Norfolk is floating just like Chioggia does in the Lagune at Venice—and at the end of the pier the Talapoosa is getting up steam just as the P. and O. steamer which will one day carry us to the home of the Rom." Within a few days the battle-fields claimed him again.

The Arlington
Washington D.C. 5.8.84

Ive got to run off to Bull Run to-morrow, *Pen*, along with Buel and a photographer and tear all around over utterly uninteresting battle fields—only they are cornfields and nothing to see on them—and then I shant get anything done because we wont have time. Still they want to go, so that is the end of it—But I know I shant get anything more done till after the first of June—and if I ever go off again with Editors—well—

The next day's letter—dateless—from Washington gave an account not solely of the visit to Bull Run, but of cycling affairs that entangled him.

It has been a day and a half since I have written you and I have had three *lils* [letters] in that time, *Pen*. But Ive done so much. Yesterday Buel and I went to Bull Run (I wrote you in the morning) and rushed all about and worked and worked and worked and I got mad at him and we had a lovely row and then made it all up again—and to-day I paraded and raced and have been a gorgeous official and worked and been photographed—and I am going to a big—such a big dinner—and will be all broken up and early to-morrow morning I am off to Mt. Vernon and start for home at night.

There was one more letter just to say: "All this bicycling fever has passed from me including my machine, which I sold yesterday for one hundred dollars.

The big dinner exceeded in vileness anything I ever assisted at—it was even worse than the speeches and they were horrid as thee may imagine when I tell thee that I made one."

The short time remaining on his return in May was one frantic rush. He had fortunately finished the etchings commissioned by the Putnams, one for their new edition of Poe, two for their translations of "Holland and Its People" by De Amicis, but the battle-field drawings were still to be done; illustrations in Boston to be fitted in somehow; etchings to be selected, printed, framed for the Grolier Club, to which he was that spring elected a member, Drake having proposed him—a great pleasure this as, within or beyond his means, he had begun book collecting; endless visits to the editorial office for more commissions in England and Italy, arrangements, advice. To the already long list, articles were added with Edmund Gosse on the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, with Doctor B. E. Martin on Old Chelsea, with Doctor Eggleston again on "By-Roads of Savoy". A portfolio of Venice etchings was arranged for, and, he wrote me exultingly, "They do like the tricycle article and I've got you some work in Rome too . . And they will take

Ye Pilgrimage
to
Rome—

Also some Italian *St. Nicholas* things for you."

In the midst of the hurry and excitement, it began to look as if there would not be the wedding upon which so much work depended. Pennell was marrying

"Out of Meeting" and so could not be married in the Meetinghouse. A Catholic priest would not marry me, because of my revolt against church discipline. My father, an ardent convert, threatened to leave the house if I asked his brother, an Episcopal clergyman, to replace the priest. For a while, the situation was desperate. We were forced to appeal to the mayor, a horrid breach of decorum in the Philadelphia of those remote days. Both families were shocked, though mine bore up to the point of allowing the ceremony to be performed in the front parlor of Number 1110, Spruce Street. As the last straw, the notice of the wedding in the paper left Philadelphians in no doubt of our disgrace.

Our original idea was a wedding journey in a caravan with Gypsies. But the Gypsies we counted on vanished, also the man who was to supply the car with himself as driver. The disappointment was bitter. We were reduced to the commonplace and took our journey in the train to the near mountains. It was just as well. In a Gypsy camp we could never have finished what had to be finished—Bull Run, Washington and Stanford White drawings, an *Atlantic* article. And a week in New York was barely sufficient for final details at the *Century* office. On the last Saturday in June, with a promise of return tickets from the *Century*, and a letter of credit for eighteen hundred dollars, we sailed on the *Oregon* for Liverpool.

CHAPTER IX

OUR FIRST SUMMER IN ENGLAND (1884)

A LATE afternoon arrival in Liverpool; a journey by night to Chester; one day in the town to see the Cathedral in anticipation of the Cathedral Series; one evening at Blossom's Hotel famous in its prime, with a group of Philadelphia artists arrived there before us—Stephen Parrish, his wife, his son Fred who was to become known as Maxfield Parrish, Miss Margaret Lesley, soon to be Mrs. Bush-Brown; the day after, straight to London, to a little old-fashioned hotel in Craven Street, Strand, quickly exchanged for lodgings at Number 36 Bedford Place, Bloomsbury; and, for the first time, I began to understand how Joseph Pennell worked.

The most urgent commission was the article, which expanded into two, on old Chelsea, a great deal older in the Eighties than in the Nineteen-twenties. The subject was suggested by Doctor Benjamin Ellis Martin, a real American of a type rapidly passing and to us the more sympathetic and astonishingly American against a British background. He knew London better than most Londoners, no part as intimately as Chelsea. He was away when we got to London, but Pennell could not wait for his author, could not wait until we were settled in lodgings, but was off the next morning, discovering Chelsea for himself, bringing his first drawing

back in the late afternoon. It was the same, day after day. No lingering at the breakfast table or over the morning paper. Breakfast eaten, he gathered up portfolio, T square, camp stool, and was gone, seldom to get back until the dinner hour, if then. He scorned an eight-hour day, had no patience with a time limit on any kind of labour, from art to street-cleaning. When conditions permitted, his drawing was begun and finished on the spot, to preserve its accuracy, its freshness, its spontaneity. But the sun will not stand still for the most untiring artist. The light and effects will change and sometimes drawings, when little remained to be done, were finished at home or carried to the same spot at the same hour the following day. It was a good thing for my nerves that I realized only gradually the risk he ran when he worked out of doors in town. A man who draws in the street collects a crowd as surely as the man who digs a hole, and often Pennell's method of getting rid of people who bothered him was as irritating as effective. His pen, dipped into the bottle hanging from a buttonhole of his coat, could with an innocent flourish scatter the gaping crowd. He had at his command the answer that does not turn away wrath. When an Englishman, who had long looked over his shoulder on a refuge in the crowded Strand, at last asked what he was doing, "Minding my business," he said; "dont you think it about time for you to mind yours?" His tactics were more apt to lead to trouble on the Continent, where tempers are quicker, and in Italy and France and Spain I had reason to tremble. But he would allow nothing, however disagreeable or vexatious, to interfere. Engagements, unless

BEDFORD PLACE, BLOOMSBURY

Etching by Joseph Pennell

for business connected with his work, had no chance. He did not keep them; that was all there was to it. Life, as he conceived it, was made for work; nothing else counted.

Not that he did not often play. He loved to play, so long as play was not an encroachment upon what he cared for more. Those first few months in London we explored the river on the penny steamboat from Greenwich to Richmond. We wandered through the streets to stumble by chance upon its picturesque and historic corners, its churches, its Inns of Court, its galleries. We took in all the picture shows, though he wasted no time over them. A critic, who once made the rounds of the *Salon* with him could not get over the way he would rush like a streak through room after room, apparently looking at nothing and yet never failing to stop before the few things worth seeing. We went often to the theatre, which eventually offended him beyond measure. We were amused by the Health Exhibition, one of the big exhibitions London used to organize every summer. And he was willing to go with me to the afternoon teas to which finally, in the course of time, he could not be dragged.

We had hardly settled before we were invited to one of these functions by Miss Mary Robinson, in London for the season with her family in their Earl's Terrace house, one of the most interesting houses in London. The father, George Robinson, in his way a rival of William Morris, was a decorator, with headquarters in Mayfair. The mother's genius was for entertaining. Mary Robinson was already a sought-after celebrity. Her sister, Mabel, was threatening a novel in the immediate future. They were "at home" Tuesday and

Friday afternoons, and drew to their big drawing-room everybody of distinction or notoriety in art and letters. On that first afternoon we met two of the newest celebrities—John Sargent, fresh from the *Salon* and the scandal of his "Madame Gautreau", and Vernon Lee, masculine in her looks as in her books, preparing to drop her bombshell of a story—"Miss Brown"—into the midst of the perishing flock of the Pre-Raphaelites. A few of that perishing flock were also of the party. Dante Rossetti, the central figure, had been dead for two years. Millais and Woolner had seceded to the Royal Academy. But Ford Madox Brown, considered by many the father of Pre-Raphaelitism, had not fallen from grace, and he was there and we were introduced to him—a weary, ancient man, with careworn face, prophet-like beard, and the sadness of a Jeremiah in the throes of delivering the Lamentations. With him was his daughter, Mrs. William Michael Rossetti, tall and gaunt, dowdily dressed, prominent teeth, talking much of Wagner; and his son-in-law, William Michael Rossetti, his face no less sad and careworn. He confided to me his desire to go to America where prodigious big prices were paid to the poor writer though, he added with British tact, he cared to see nothing, nobody, over there save Walt Whitman. William Sharp, pink, white and golden, a handsome creature, was the link between old and new, hanging on to Pre-Raphaelitism in his recent book about Dante Rossetti, preparing to break away into fresh pastures for himself as Fiona Macleod. However, that afternoon in this distinguished company, Pennell was the hero of the day because of the Italian escapade which, in the decorous London drawing-room, took on

the proportions of an elopement. Mr. Robinson made such an inexhaustible joke of it, warning everybody against the American Lovelace who ran off with, not one, but three at a time, that we suspected his laughter was a cover to his fear of unpleasant and compromising gossip. If so, it did not lessen his cordiality and we returned to the Robinsons on Tuesday or Friday more than once before the season was over. When they left town for Epsom and invited us down there, Pennell was adamant in refusing. He had no work to do in Epsom. Therefore he would not go.

Another house to which we were welcomed was not without Pre-Raphaelite associations. Miss Lesley introduced us to Mrs. Anne Gilchrist, who had had the help of the two Rossettis in finishing her husband's "Life of William Blake" and who, with William Michael Rossetti, appointed herself a Whitman missionary in England. Her visit to Philadelphia, conveniently near Camden for Whitman worship, was a few years in the past and, with her daughter Grace and her son Herbert, she was living in Well Road, Hampstead. The house, Keats' Corner, was disappointingly new outside but satisfactorily old inside, the rooms filled with Sheraton and Chippendale, the walls hung with Blake drawings and eighteenth-century engravings, and, presiding, Mrs. Gilchrist, as venerable as prints and furniture—a large, heavy woman in loose flowing black gown, its voluminous folds held at the waist by a girdle of ribbon; over her shoulders an enormous white ruffled fichu fastened with a cameo brooch; her hair parted severely in the middle, brought down over her ears, twisted at the back into a little knot from which hung a long streamer

of black tulle. And this exaggerated British matron, as she remains in my memory, had only a few years before been writing to Walt Whitman as impassioned love letters as any woman ever wrote.

Herbert Gilchrist, her son, was young, had studied at the Royal Academy Schools in London, with Chase in America. His work was sincere, thorough, and gave promise which it never fulfilled. In this early promise Pennell was interested. After tea, the two would go to the near-by studio and leave me alone with Mrs. Gilchrist, who had a genius for the Englishwoman's embarrassed silences. The Carlyles had been her next-door neighbours in Cheyne Row before her husband's death and one afternoon she talked of them freely. They were far more congenial than usually supposed, she thought, though Mrs. Carlyle might have been more sympathetic and entered more fully into Carlyle's feelings, might have refrained from making mountains out of molehills, as in the Lady Ashburton affair. Perhaps it was her duty to publish her impressions in order to counteract Froude's distorted picture. Suddenly her confidences ended in an agonized attack of silence, so acute that it reduced me to rival speechlessness until, with a tremendous struggle, she warned me, that if I intended to report to the public anything she said to me in private, she would put a curb upon her tongue. And Pennell, at this moment coming back with young Gilchrist, supper was announced and Mrs. Gilchrist regained her composure during the terrific battle of the two artists over French art which, in those years, was the English artist's pet bogeyman.

We went often to the Trübners where the Lelands

were staying. Mrs. Trübner, a Belgian, the widow of the publisher Carl Trübner, a German, lived lavishly and hospitably in a big Hamilton Terrace house, St. John's Wood. Her dinners startled us by their endless courses, inexhaustible wine, and the insatiable appetite of her guests. Bret Harte was sometimes there and sometimes a nephew, Wilhelm Trübner, the artist, silent and morose, as if waiting impatiently for the reputation overlong on the way. An occasional Sunday saw us at Doctor Garnett's in St. Edmund's Terrace, Primrose Hill. I never thought him as much at home there as in the Reading Room of the British Museum, where he seemed on intimate terms with every book upon the miles of bookshelves. To ask his aid was to be referred not only to the volume but the very page for the information one sought. In the Reading Room he invariably appeared in a shabby top hat, so that I felt it indiscreet to look at him hatless in St. Edmund's Terrace, much as though I had surprised a Saint without his halo. Time was spared by Pennell for his old Florentine friends, the Arthur Lemons, and for the publisher Kegan Paul, who objected in no moderate terms to my "Life of Mary Wollstonecraft", but was willing to show us his Godwin and Wollstonecraft treasures, among them a lock of Mary's hair.

But the houses to which Pennell had most pleasure in going, though he did not go often, were Whistler's and Seymour Haden's. With these two men time could not be wasted; from them he could learn. On Whistler he called but once that summer—at the studio Number 13 Tite Street, afterwards Sargent's, an adventure he recorded: Whistler evidently disposed to be his friendliest,

Pennell shy face to face with the artist he acknowledged as his master, and at first confused by the Whistler manner, the Whistler laugh, the Whistler "What, Ha! Ha!" At our lodging the afternoon of this same visit, he found an invitation from Seymour Haden to lunch the following Sunday in Hertford Square. He and Stephen Parrish went together, were benevolently called "young men" by Haden, were allowed to look over his latest prints, were told that he was too old to work and never expected to etch again, also that if the day should come when he would have to sell his Rembrandts or his Whistlers, his Rembrandts would go—"and they both went", was Pennell's later comment.

By the beginning of August the Chelsea drawings were finished, we had bought the cycle for our ride from Florence to Rome, a Coventry Rotary, this time a tandem,—and, with one day to pack, we would be ready to start for Italy. Fate, in the shape of the *Century* authorities, ordained otherwise. Edmund Gosse, then representing the magazine in London, where the papers were full of reports of cholera throughout Italy, declared it folly to think of going, refused to take the responsibility, cabled to the New York office. The editors agreed and cabled to say so—They could wait for the article. Our families wrote to recommend prudence. To Pennell who was, as it always pleased him to say, the born illustrator, came an inspiration: Why not cycle down to Canterbury where Seeley had commissioned drawings for the *Portfolio*? I would gain practice, we would follow Chaucer's route, and if some publisher would not want "A Canterbury Pilgrimage", he was much mistaken.

Chaucer's route took us into the beautiful county of Kent, so beautiful that we were two days in doing what might have been done in one—two days loafing along its winding roads, up and down its gentle hills, through its sleepy villages, between its cherry orchards and hop gardens. We stayed a couple of weeks in the Falstaff—does it still exist, I wonder?—the old inn just outside Westgate, with gables, big overhanging bow windows, swinging sign—the design of Arthur Hughes, the Pre-Raphaelite—dimity-curtained bedrooms, low-ceilinged taproom patronized by farmers and drovers and natives; endless chops and cheese for luncheon and dinner. Stephen Parrish, his wife and brother joined us. Doctor Martin travelled down from London to see the Chelsea drawings, cyclists came and went, for the Falstaff was a Cyclists' Touring Club hotel, and in the early years of the sport one's wheel was an introduction. All the warm August day Pennell worked in and about the Cathedral, studied its architecture, hunted for fine distant views, made his drawings for the *Portfolio*. The charm of the town almost reconciled us to the postponement of Italy.

After Canterbury the opportunity came to test the resolution reached before our marriage, not to allow anything to interfere with his drawing and my writing. Should they call us in different directions, each must go his or her way. Work for *Harper's* called Pennell to Scotland, my work was in the British Museum and the galleries. When, in the following letter, he referred to the "good show" he made and the "best show" Strang made, he was coaching me for the notice of the Painter-Etchers' where he had many prints conspicuously hung.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Ballater 9.2.84

Pen, I am here—where here is I havent any idea—in a nice bit bonnie hotel—with a lot of men tea-ing and one old love telling all about his travels—fact he went to "four 'otels afore 'e could get a bed". I got in at my old landlady's and was received with open arms and put to bed on a sofa—and to-night I am here (as I said afore) Ride most awfully uninteresting—I dont think much of this "grand scenery"—our tame old Water Gap scenery beats it all to pieces—Oh this awful man—he is telling a story about a purse lost fifty years ago—only six-pence in it, but it took half an hour to tell. I got here just about an hour after the Queen—she was received by the whole family—I believe they filled the town—I suppose I shall see a lot of them to-morrow—

Did you get the notes, etc. all right?

What I want you to say is that William Strang makes the best show—the etchings technically are wonderful—but one can scarcely tell how much is Rembrandt and how much is Strang—

You *will have to say* that I make a good show—of course it is an honour to have more prints on the line than any other man showing.

To-morrow morning. I am going up to Balmoral. I think I can get through in three or four days—I have written Lang asking him where I shall meet him—write to Edinburgh

Bank of
Scotland

I really *think* I want to get back

Tiro Pal

Imperial Hotel
Aberdeen 9.3.

I've been and gone and done it—that is to say I went up to Balmoral to-day—Found that I would not be allowed to go into the Castle or Grounds—made a lot of sketches and am back here again and to-morrow I shall go to North Berwick—so dont write *here* any more—to-morrow I shall run down to the Bank to get your *lils* which I want.

Oh *Pen* there is such a lot I want to write you but I am all tired out—to-morrow you shall have it and a bunch of heather.

So *tiro Rom*
bids thee
Kushto Bak

North Berwick 9.4.84

I left Balmoral yesterday because I couldent get in and came here to-day—awful grim these Scotch and the "poor Old Lady" seems afraid every one is going to murder her—I suppose I with my long hair am more dangerous than the ordinary tourist—I ll get it cut before I come home—anyway I called on one of the powers—the Queen's Dr. *Proffit* (?) or Proudfit or some thing of the sort—and after I had been cross-examined by a policeman standing in the road as to where I was going and what I was doing—I informed him "I was walking"—which piece of information overcame him so much that he almost forgot to salute the second Prince of Wales—Then I came across Sir William Harcourt—and then the "Grand Old Man" went up—But I found the Dr. P. at last—and he stared at me from head to foot and then—

"What do you want?"

Me "I want to see *you*."

Then we became reasonably polite—but I dident get in. I dident stay on for some games—as I must have slept in a stable for three nights—or walked eighteen miles—not fancying which I came down in a four-in-hand.

Here I am in a little apartment and shall only stay three or four days for there is very little in the town.

Then I shall go back to St. Andrews—which I believe has a gate and Cathedral and then to York (they want me to do something there) . . . Then we will come up to Cambridge and then Italia

Good night
I am so tired

Edinburgh 9.5.84

Here I am back again—just got in and glad enough will I be to get some *lils* to-morrow morning. After I have got the *lils* I shall

start for Saint Andrews—but hope I may not be there for more than a day—*entre nous* I dont see how *Harper's* could have found two more uninteresting places in Scotland (or any where else) than Balmoral and North Berwick. The writer of the former [article] was a toady and the latter wished to pay his board bill—dont know how he could do it though—these Scotch hotels are more extravagant than American ones. This afternoon I stopped at Preston Pans where Prince Charlie etc. etc. and sketched the castle which I went for—then there was the most lovely Tudor house Ive ever seen—a vision —got it—then walked down and all over the town which was so charming—would drive Parrish wild—most wonderful old houses, no two alike—man said the Prestonpanians were too poor to fix them up—Now here was a lovely thing but the L.L.D. of a Scotchman who wrote the article of course never saw the place—artists should write their own articles or better get their wives to do it.

St. Andrews 9.6.84

Only a line. I have just gotten here—have a room right on the sea—I wish you had too. Have seen the old abbey—pretty. Dont know where Lang is—Well done on the articles.

Will write in the morning—wish I was to be with you to-night

Tiro Pal

St. Andrews—

I am still here but the place was pretty near blown away this morning—at least a corner of the roof of the house was and my sitting room has wash basins in the corners to catch the drippings which still descend—and remind me of Luray—especially to-night when the gas is low. Lang is here—and we had "a lark" this afternoon—at least we solemnly walked over the place—and he showed me with delight the places where as a boy he had broken windows—and though he had lived here several years I had no trouble in showing him some things—though I am not overcome with the picturesqueness of the place—still a thing over here has got to be pretty good to please me. I think I shall leave by Wednesday—spend the rest of the week in York and try to be back Saturday—I ve got an awful cold—and David Douglas has asked me to his house in Edinburgh. . . . . .

Our *St. Nicholas* Public School articles were next on our programme. Those early months of our life together, I was continually learning something new about Joseph Pennell and this something new at Harrow was, for me, embarrassing. A master gave a tea inviting "all Harrow" to meet the distinguished young American artist and his wife. All Harrow came, also the wife, everybody save the distinguished young American artist. I reproached him when I had him alone. He could not see why. The afternoon was perfect, the light just right, he was just in the right mood; why stop to drink tea he did not want and talk to people who did not interest him? So it was throughout his life. At least, at Harrow, he did not plant his camp stool where he could be seen from the drawing-room windows, as in Lincoln two summers afterwards when Precentor Venables asked us to tea.

At Eton the Reverend Edward Lyttleton, in those days a young master, to whom we had a letter of introduction, spared us superfluous embarrassment. He asked us to lunch because it was his freest time for talk, and made no attempt to entertain us or invite people to meet us. He was generous with facts and information, showed us everything, including the famous Eton wall game of football, played in the rain with a group of portentously solemn boys in Eton jackets looking on. His duty conscientiously done, he went his way and left us to go ours in peace.

CHAPTER X

FROM FLORENCE TO ROME ON A TRICYCLE
WINTER IN ROME · SPRING IN VENICE
(1884–1885)

The rainy season in England had set in—if there is any other sort of season in that rain-swept land—and as the visits to the two schools brought us to the end of September, and as Italy, except in the south, was free from cholera, and as Mr. Gosse and the editors no longer objected and our families no longer worried, we took the train at Holburn Viaduct on Sunday morning, the twelfth of October, and started from London on the journey which was the immediate reason for our marriage.

Luck was with us. The journey from the start was as perfect as Pennell had promised. His delight in getting back to Italy and sharing its loveliness with me was something to remember. We were awake early the second morning, from the train watched day break in the Apennines, looked out upon Pistoia as we circled round it, saw its picturesqueness come out of the mist, in Florence dropped tricycle and bag at the Minerva, Howells' hotel, and, without pause, walked out to the places Pennell had longed to show me. Before the day was over we had been to Santa Maria della Novella; Or San Michele; the Duomo; the Ponte Vecchio; into the Pitti and Uffizi to introduce ourselves to Timothy

Cole, our fellow *Century* contributor who, on his high working stool, was busy engraving Old Italian Masters; up to Fiesole; down in the late afternoon to call on Vernon Lee, who thought our cycling trip mad and hinted at bandits as we neared Rome. Another old friend prophesied malaria at I have forgotten just where, while comfortless hotels, bad food, dishonest landlords, we were warned were everywhere. These prophecies added to the sense of adventure.

Nothing marred the pleasure of the ride, the joy of seeing *Italy from a Tricycle*. Before leaving London we had exchanged the Coventry Rotary for a Humber Tandem, a better designed, better looking machine, and

it did not fail us from beginning to end. The Italian roads were good and the motor, that to-day litters them up with tourists, was still in the far future. The names of the towns through which we wheeled and where we stayed were guarantees of beauty—Empoli—

Poggibonsi, Siena, Monte Oliveto, Monte Pulciano, Cortona, Perugia, Assisi, Spoleto, Terni, Civita Castellana. The weather was beyond reproach, day after day of cool October sunshine. None of the threatened enemies lay in wait. We met no bandits, were victims of no malaria. I would not exchange the old friendly little *albergo* as we knew it for to-day's big tourist hotel, the same from one end of the world to the other. Not even our arrest, for some infringement of cycling regulations, in the Piazza di Spagna on the late afternoon we wheeled into Rome, could throw a shadow over the most beautiful, the most successful of the many beautiful, successful journeys we were to take together.

We thought to hurry back to Philadelphia, for we worried about his father's health. But news was reassuring and Rome, though rapidly modernizing itself, had not lost its charm. We were without clothes save those carried on the tandem and left in a small bag to be forwarded from Florence. But to dispense with the garments of ceremony meant social freedom to Pennell. We took rooms on the highest floor of the highest house on the Pincian, in the Via della Purificazione, with windows looking down upon the city from St. Peter's to the Quirinal—the first of the windows with a beautiful outlook that became for him an absolute necessity. By day we led a cloistered life. Six flights of stone stairs were too many to run up and down lightly. At noon Pennell would face them to go for letters at the bankers and to forage for the lunch of cakes and fruit which was our daily fare, except when the *padrona* cooked a huge bowl of *maccaroni* for us. Idling was unknown in our high retreat—text and drawings for the

story of our ride had to be finished, articles on the Christmas festivities in the Aracoeli and the Piazza Navona for *St. Nicholas*, and our impressions of "The Stones of Rome" for the *Portfolio* had to be written and newspaper letters on whatever subjects presented themselves. No idling indeed—all that winter we worked hard by day. But when late afternoon came we climbed down the six flights for long prowls through the streets, into churches and galleries, out to the Compagna if the light lasted. When an article was finished, text and drawings posted to New York or London, or when the post brought us the November *Century* with the first of Howells' "Tuscan Cities" in it, or my "Mary Wollstonecraft", we took a holiday, scorned cake and fruit, descended our six flights to eat the best lunch we could order, and to see the many sights in Rome we wanted to see for which our working days were too short. During these prowls the new thing I learned about Pennell was how, instinctively, without the aid of guidebook or passer-by, he could find his way straight to wherever he wanted to go—a convenient instinct that on many a journey saved us time and trouble.

The dinner hour found us in some modest, friendly little *trattoria*, usually one where officers dined, for where they went food was good and prices were cheap: the Posta and the Cavour for choice, both long since vanished. For special occasions we reserved the Falcone, where we ate strange dishes of meat with rich sauces and drank the wine of Orvieto. I cannot believe the Falcone has gone too; it dated back to the Caesars, so they said in Rome, which would not be Rome without it. After dinner we adjourned to the *café*, that blessed

institution for the homeless. And it is extraordinary how artists, in any town where there are any, make straight, like homing pigeons, for the same *café* and the same table. We drifted into the much gilded, much mirrored Nazionale in the Piazza Colonna, and almost at once we gathered a friendly group around us. Sometimes Elihu Vedder, by then a fixture in Rome, joined us, but not often. The story was that his wife kept the purse and seldom allowed him enough for the *café* twice a day. She liked his friends to come to their apartment after dinner or turn up in his studio on Sunday afternoon. He was in what is called the prime of life, his belief in his own powers was magnificent, his "Omar Khayyam" had just been published. It was the chief topic of talk wherever Vedder was. On one of our evenings with him he made his memorable often-quoted discovery, stopping his flood of talk as he paced the floor with the wonder of it. A pause—and "No, I am not Vedder—I *am* Omar Khayyam!" he declared—And, promptly, an exasperated artist who had not got a word in for an hour or so, made his discovery: "No, Vedder, you're not. You're the great I AM!"

Our little table at the Nazionale was crowded without Vedder. Donohue, the sculptor, frequently drank his coffee with us to report the progress of his hopeless search for a model, as beautiful as himself, to pose for his Sophocles. Barnum seldom failed us—the great Barnum who looked down upon all other painters and was never known to paint a picture though, every afternoon, when he was not at teas and receptions or dressing for dinners and balls and operas, he would go with Pennell to draw from the nude at Gigi's. And I

remember Coleman up from Capri on a visit; and Griswold; and stray Norwegians; and Walter Cope, the young Philadelphia architect; and Davies, though exactly who Davies was or what kind of work he did I cannot say. His chief occupation, according to his own account, was to sit in the sun, the reason for his living in Rome where sunshine was cheap while in England it could not be had for a fortune.

By Carnival time work ceased to be an excuse to linger in Rome. We got what fun we could out of it. Then, we packed knapsacks and bag; we sold the tricycle; we paid our bill to the *padrona* to whom we left a reminder of the *forestieri* in the green stain on her carpet which came from trying to bite a copper plate in a wash basin; we took the train for Naples, free of cholera but with reminders of it in the printed prayers and holy pictures fastened up on doors throughout those quarters of the town that had suffered most. From Naples to Pompeii, in both places for travel papers by Frank Stockton to be illustrated for *St. Nicholas;* from Pompeii, by way of Naples and Rome and Orvieto, to Pisa, Lucca, Pistoia, halts in these three towns, Pennell determined to prove that the eloquence of his letters the year before was not excessive; from Pisa to Venice, and a longer halt at the Casa Kirsch on the Riva, with the Lagune, San Giorgio, fishing boats, the Islands, sunshine and storm out of our windows.

The portfolio of etchings in Venice fell through, I do not remember why. *Harper's*, however, approved of an article on "Venetian Fishing Boats." Its publication was delayed until March, 1890, but the commission reconciled our consciences to staying on during two long months.

Plates were etched, even though the *Century* would not have them. Pennell knew Venice well, knew just where to go on the Riva, the canals and *calli*, in Murano, Burano, Chioggia. One or two plates were made in Rome, too hastily to please him and he never published them. In Venice he could spare the time, and it was a delight to feel the etching needle between his fingers again, to see the shining lines in the well-grounded plate, to wrestle with the famous old press, said to have been Canaletto's, appropriated that spring by Duveneck to whose studio Pennell was ever welcome. In Venice the artists' gatherings of an evening were round the dinner table at the shabby, noisy Antica Panada, much done up since with sacrifice of character as the result, and in the chosen corner of the Café Orientale on the Riva, where coffee was a few *centessimi* cheaper than on the Piazza. The centre of these gatherings was Duveneck, in danger of being ruined as an artist by the charm of Venice which had him in thrall. Pennell was sorely tempted to risk the same ruin, and, remembering Howells, actually cast a longing eye at the Venetian consulship, and we endeavoured through my friendship with Katharine Bayard, to secure the influence of her father, then Senator. Luckily nothing came of it. Luckily too, Pennell was not disappointed, for he began to realize that the consulship would necessitate an office and of offices he had had his fill. Moreover, Duveneck, his daily companion, was a warning. He had grown quite content to live in his attic at the Casa Kirsch, doing as little work as possible during the day, spending the evening with his "boys" or their successors, and adding little save his smile to the talk.

His "boys" had deserted him one by one, it may be urged by him not to fall into his indolent ways. Everybody's affection for him was great, he was never without devoted disciples, but he was squandering his talent on loafing. His marriage not long after saved him.

Blossoms were showing above high garden walls, market boats were laden with fresh fruits and vegetables, abandoned Torcello was a wilderness of flowers when, reluctantly, we left Venice in May. We had been married all but a year, we had carried out many of our schemes. Success had been our portion. We had seen the things we wanted to see, done the work we wanted to do, lived the life we wanted to live. We had travelled far and the letter of credit for eighteen hundred dollars was not yet exhausted. Before we started from home, a kindly anxious aunt of mine asked Pennell how long we would be gone, as though impatient to have us back, which she was not. "Until the money gives out," was his answer, and on her face I read her thought: "How soon will they be on the family's hands?" Well, the money had not given out, waiting commissions promised that it would not give out for two or three years, anyway. Our experiment was justified from the worldly point of view. From our point of view, its justification was the pleasure it brought us, how much we alone could judge.

CHAPTER XI

RETURN TO LONDON · IN THE CATHEDRAL TOWNS (1885)

The English Cathedrals had waited two years. Impatient editors suggested they could wait no longer. From Venice we travelled straight through to London, back to the old lodgings, though not from delight in them. Dreary, grimy Bloomsbury as an outlook from our windows was a sad exchange for the sunshine of Rome and Venice. But our trunks had been left at Number 36 Bedford Place, a lodging hunt takes time, Pennell was tremendously busy. He was never anything else.

To begin with, he was eager to prove the etchings made in Venice on a decent press. He was without a press, without a studio. He went to Frederick Goulding, spent mornings with him and never ceased to regret it. Goulding was described by contemporaries as "the best professional printer in England", but not by the artist bent on getting out of his plate what he, and not the printer, knew was in it—"Goulding with his pot of treacle" was Whistler's description. He suited Seymour Haden and rather fancied his share of the work more important than the etcher's. He condescended to the young American, patronized him, and condescension, patronage from anybody was some thing the young American, the most sensitive man who ever lived, could

not stand. Hitherto he had found printers ready to work with him in his way, not in theirs, and in their printing shops printed in rapid succession the Philadelphia, the New Orleans, the Italian series. Goulding discouraged him, with the result that fewer new etchings were exhibited and published from 1884 to 1893 than during any other decade of his life. In the spring of 1885, however, Duveneck, having joined us in London, the two men spent many days etching together, chiefly by the riverside, while in the evenings, they and Walter Cope, dropping in by chance, drew Venetian chimney-pots and I wrote the article that the drawings were to illustrate and that, for some reason, was never published.

A more urgent matter for Pennell—for us both—was our "Canterbury Pilgrimage." The *Century* hesitated to accept it because so much "Pennell material was already on hand or ordered." The *English Illustrated*, Comyns Carr editor, refused it for the stock reason that "it was not available." Richmond Seeley was of another mind. He liked the drawings, said he would read the manuscript, agreed to let us have his decision promptly. Within a fortnight we had it. He would bring out the "Pilgrimage" as a book in a paper cover for a shilling, would have it on all the railway book stalls, would deluge England with it. Better still, he would bring it out immediately. Our excitement was great. For our first book together, Cathedrals would have to wait again, no matter what the protests from New York. Pennell spent hours in the British Museum studying old manuscripts and Caxtons, hunting up appropriate motives for cover design and chapter headings. He would not leave town until the proofs were passed.

A third reason would have delayed him in any case. The Painter-Etchers' Fourth Annual Exhibition was to open towards the end of May. Seymour Haden, apparently friendlier than ever, was full of promises. Two of Pennell's etchings must go in the Society's Portfolio and Pennell must serve on the Executive Committee. It was important that Americans should be represented. Nineteen of his prints were sent to the exhibition and hung; the early Philadelphia, the Tuscan, some of the recent Venice plates. They were praised by the critics, bought by the public, but none appeared in any Portfolio issued by the Society. Neither he nor any American was put on the Executive Committee, the chief reason why he and the other Americans presently resigned. They lost confidence in Haden's promises, realized that British members feared their influence and competition.

The Private View was held on the twenty-eighth of May. By the thirty-first proofs of "A Canterbury Pilgrimage" were passed for press. Drawings in Oxford and an article together for the *Portfolio*, "Down by the River", were turned in, and early in June Pennell hurried to Canterbury to finish the drawings for the same magazine and begin the *Century* Cathedral Series, as he did under difficulties made a jest of when writing to me. The letter is without date or heading.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Dear *Pen*, Three letters to two postals. But I have been trying to work from seven in the morning until half past nine—when the Deaness would let me alone. It came about this way—went to ask her Pa if I could draw—Pa greets me and wants to see drawings—daughter (N.B. not pretty) wants to see them also. I sit in the yard, she comes out, wont I come to lunch—of course I will—bad lunch

—with, Dean—and Deaness mamma—precocious daughter and artistic daughter—lunch bad I am taken all over the 'ole 'ouse—beautiful. Wont I draw in the back yard and they will all come and look at me. No, I wont—

This morning the daughter comes to me in the big court and sits and talks—do I mind—oh no— I only spoil a sketch. This afternoon she comes all the way out to the meadows—and wont I come and do their back yard—and she can see me do it—no I must go back to London now or never. But she introduced me to the Librarian of the Cathedral—and I discover that we might have made our pilgrimage oh so historical—and to some other people with back yards—But I am tired out and going to bed and I will tell you the rest to-morrow

Jo

After four days in Canterbury he was off to Liverpool to meet his father, coming to live with us always we hoped, and his Aunt Martha Barton, whom he loved and to whom he was giving this one great adventure of the quiet Quaker lady's life. He waited for them till the last minute in Chester. "Just had a lovely walk all round the walls," he wrote me, "and found a stunning subject and had a good day—but somehow did nothing of any importance." The next letter, announcing their arrival, begged me to go to tea with the Arthur Lemons, and told me the *Century* would make two articles of our Italian journey though only one was ordered.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Blossoms Hotel
Chester.

Pen Dear. They got here all right. I went to the steamer to meet them. Nothing the matter with the aunt. She of course knows more of the town than the oldest inhabitant and all the guides put together—

Its rather amoosin to see them—they go it in the same reckless fashion that the Parrishes did—and not being millionaires I had to

read them a lesson and now they have gone to bed—I shall finish my sketch to-morrow—and do my motive—

And Wednesday—start for London but whether I shall get any further than Lichfield goodness knows. I havent seen the Dean yet—will go to-morrow—after my work is done.

Think of it, those two have been up the Cathedral tower—round the Cloisters and down the Crypt today—and under the Rows.

I want you to go to the Lemons on Wednesday anyway—please do—

The *Century* letter says that they "fear we have forgotten" how many Roman articles were ordered—*not much*—it was only one—but in view of the etc. etc. material they will *take* TWO—that's settled but the deep ones they pay me $1300.00 for these drawings and *keep them all*. Sharp, eh—They want more Chelsea things, give me good advice about Cathedrals and THUNDER as to Stockton. I wish I had a fling at 'em—but they say the Pilgrims Progress is O.K.

Jo

On his way South he stopped at Lichfield and Peterborough both, taking a day in between to run up to London and sign our contract with Seeley. I stayed in Bloomsbury, it being too soon to leave his father and aunt alone in London. I had never known, never been with Friends before. As I sat with these two in the evening, both silent, hands folded in their laps, motionless, not even reading but resting their eyes for to-morrow's sight-seeing, I marvelled the more at Joseph Pennell's energy, his vigorous, vivid interest, his inexhaustible incentive, his gaiety, his quick temper, his tireless joy in movement, in work—what relation had he with these placid, emotionless people? How did what Wells calls "the pitiless pressure to do", so inordinately strong in him, survive the restraint and calm of family life in the old Lombard Street and Fisher's Lane houses?

Lichfield enchanted him. "Far more beautiful than Canterbury, less the Cathedral with its west end notoriously nothing but a stone mason's job," than the distant views, the most beautiful of all from a hill where one sees the whole Cathedral looming up about the tower with the two ponds in the background.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

George Hotel
Lichfield

Dear *Pen*

Why dont something happen to me—I dont have half the excitement you do—the only thing at present is that this town too is invaded by yeomanry—and a big dinner is going on upstairs, a band is playing on the landing, drunken yeomanry are all over the place—and I expect to find half a dozen in my bed (the band is playing Yankee Doodle)

Awful glad about the notices of *Mary*—

Did you see that index to *Notes and Queries* which I sent you by the parent—there may be something in it for the witches.

Dont put yourself out at all for the parent and aunt—The parent is a much older man than he was a year ago and we shall have to look out for him. Or I shall—you are not to worry about him—But I think he will be comfortable in London—They were like a couple of children in Chester

Ive a proposition to make—why wouldn't it be a good thing for you to run down to Rugby now—it is on this line—I could meet you there—and then we could return home together—Eh?—

Lichfield

Got all your letters—I have finished four drawings and want to do about as many more. But probably wont—One drawing is decent—pretty—and the other two are commonplace—I wish I could keep up to the mark all the time but it is awfully hard work to do so—I think when I come back instead of going south I shall work my way north, beginning with Peterborough—which I saw the other day and was not at all impressed with. It has no spire; apparently has been taken down as there is a lot of scaffolding about. I dont

know if it will be the best time to go to Rugby now as you want to see a football match and you certainly wont this half—Hadn't we better wait—I may turn up in London any time.

Has the parent invested in a tall hat? I told him that he should *but* has he? Absolutely nothing happens here. I see nobody but the chambermaid and an occasional cycler. But though I only converse about the weather with the C.M. she is usually much more interesting than the cycler—though two very decent fellows have been here—and I stayed up till midnight talking to them. The Yeomanry, when here, painted the "figger" of poor Sam Johnson—the one you and I wrote about—half black summat like this

after getting the police force drunk—it was most 'orrible—and—took a charwoman a day to mop up.

Jo—

George Hotel
Lichfield

My ink is all gone so I shall have to come home soon or take to some other sort of drawing—But I only finished one drawing—maybe that will pass—but its one of the prettiest things in England so I do want to get something good out of it. My etching plates havn't come yet—the makers you know promised to send me anything I wanted—they never answered my letters—and I sent them a savage double postal card—to which they replied that the plates were just ready—and they would send them when they got the money—and one was the wrong size too—six shillings—well I did write them a *rather* nasty letter—

So I've two more drawings to finish, two not started, and an etching—and at the rate I am going I should say I would be near all summer here—but somehow I think I shall be away by the middle of the week.

Yes, the aunt is very nice but dont get too much of her and she must be impressed with the fact that we are not over here for fun

I had an awful scare yesterday—some highly venerable and respectable loafer got to bothering me and bye and bye he told me that there was a Mss. Chaucer in the Cathedral—I shut up shop—*subito*. Hunted up the Dean with one tooth which he sucked—and he confessed that he had "heard of those American magazines"? He referred me to a pompous Canon—who was a very small gun—and I was taken up along of some females—but the Mss. was luckily like unto all other Mss.—without any character of its own, but a very decent Mss. as Mss. go. Saved again—nothing else happened

Jo

His original intention was to make etchings of the Cathedrals. But he had not acquired the knowledge nor the ease in handling architectural problems that would enable him to draw them directly upon his plate, without preliminary studies, as he did the last three great Cathedrals in the French series. His only plates in the English series were the Canterbury from the

river and the St. Paul's. His next letters that summer of 1885 were from Peterborough.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

The Angel

Dear *Pen*—Got here all right—I am not at all impressed with the Cathedral and but slightly by the town, but the country about is charming—Poplars and windmills, ditches and low long houses. Got one stunning subject this afternoon I only hope I can work it up.

The parent might enjoy it so tell him to come up if he feels like it.

The tickets up and back third (very decent carriages) about 12.6.

As usual all the town is upside down—an agricultural fair this time, the front of the Cathedral is very curious, unlike anything I have ever seen. Started on a drawing but was nearly blown away—it is awfully cold too.

Got a *Century* to-day—nothing of ours in it—principally (two thirds) war—but there is an article on Mistral which of course you must read before you see Miss Preston—and one on George Eliot's country by Rose Kingsley and as soon as I have read them I'll send it to you.

I am awfully tired to-night Jo

Angel Hotel
Peterborough

Dear *Pen*—I am getting on slowly—but though there are three fine large things about this place, havent tackled them yet.

It is raining away this evening but the last two days have been glorious, such wonderful sunsets in this low flat country—I wish you could have seen them—and no one here—but two ordinary cyclers—and one decent one—nothing but races and time and makers would they talk about—till one is sick and tired of it—I am really so stupid to-night—I cant write and am going to bed—half past eight—To-morrow I shall try to see the Dean and then there may be something to write about. But I wish you could have had the tramp last night. But then you had Jean—and how was she—I am all done up—

Good Bye
Jo

The Jean referred to was Jean Ingelow to whose house I had gone to an afternoon reception and met, among others, Charles Keene, the "C.K." of the following:

Angel Hotel
Peterborough

Dear *Pen*—You send me such good long letters—What a stunning time you have had—Jean and C.K. and your sprees—but I dont envy you for I have gotten one decent drawing under way—but I shall probably spoil it—the people of this town are the most abominable Ive struck for some time—I expect to be hauled up—either for swearing or killing a choir boy—these latter are awful—

The photo turned up at noon to-day—three days on the way is good—

And I want something else—Can you go to-morrow afternoon—DONT go in the morning for I wouldnt get it until night—to Newman's in Soho where we went the other day—and get me two tubes —of moist water colour—charcoal grey and send it in the evening by post.

I dont think the Godeys will get me so easily—for I shall start right off again—in fact I wouldn't come home if it wasent for that meeting for I am beginning to get interested in my work—Was fallen upon to-day by another female—pretty—but a parson's wife—she draws accurately—but the conceit of it—If I could only come a bit of it—yes, she thought she had seen *The Century*—wasn't sure—but then she had made some sketches for the English illustrated weeklies—and had passed all the South Kensington Exams and if I wanted her to do anything—I collapsed—and departed—To-morrow I start a very pretty subject, so good-night

Jo

The beauty of the Cathedrals grew upon him with every drawing made under their shadow, with every quiet walk through the surrounding country. His worship of beauty was almost a religion to him. He was curiously reticent about the things of the inner life,

the things of the spirit. I doubt if any one ever knew the extent or limitation of his belief though he held that the Friends best understood what religion is or should be. Once from Peterborough, after one of his tramps alone with the beauty of the night, he gave me a glimpse of the deep hold this beauty had upon him. "I had such a lovely quiet walk to-night, way out of the town into the twilight—and every walk of this sort only makes me wish not utterly to die, but to go on somewhere—Feeling beauty like this, I should only be too glad to live here with a little success always."

One more letter from Peterborough was gay, the vision of a very self-conscious Matthew Arnold in the Cathedral banishing serious thought:

I went into the church to evening service thinking much about you—and wishing you were here—but no one was there but two vergers—three more strayed in and out and "Sweetness and Light" and I were left all alone with the Dean and Chapter and the Choir—how he got there I dont know. He sat and stared at me all the time he wasn't looking at the ceiling—and I wanted to tell him—that I knew perfectly well who he was—but darsent—

I think I will take you to Winchester next week, Wouldn't you like to go?—anyway we will talk about it to-morrow. So good night

Jo

The old people could now be trusted alone in London, for a short interval anyway, and we cycled to Winchester, stopping overnight at

Ripley, the little town that slept tranquilly through the week to be awakened on Sunday by a horde of cyclists from London, arriving in time for Sunday dinner at The Anchor. Winchester was the Cathedral that appealed to him least. "A sad place, but fine when seen from the hillside to the east," and he loved the walks by the river in the twilight. When he sent the drawings to the *Century*, Fraser, who had a trick of writing disagreeable letters without meaning to, found fault. Pennell's answer sums up his impressions better than anything that remains, and is appropriately quoted here, though written a year later.

TO W. LEWIS FRASER

36 Bedford Place
Russell Square W.C.
April 14th 1886

My dear Fraser—Concerning the Winchester drawings I am not forgetting our bargain about scrappiness but you may remember that when you were here you liked the interior of Winchester very much, and that you agreed with me that the exterior of the same Cathedral was about as inspiring as a New England barn. I am perfectly willing to admit that the drawing you sent back was but a sketch but I thought—as did several people to whom I showed it and who were competent to judge—that it was a most characteristic sketch, and that was the reason I sent it to you. I will work it all over, however, and will also send you another exterior from the meadows by St. Cross which I did not send you before because I did not think you would like it. When you saw those pencil drawings of the interior you thought they were among the best I had ever made and Johnson and Gilder agreed with you. Why you have since changed your mind I do not pretend to understand—The other drawing of the choir I thought was quite as good. But finally Winchester is the most unpicturesque by far of all the English Cathedrals. It may be very interesting historically and easy to write about but it is the most

difficult to draw, and after finished the least results to be had from it, of any in the series or perhaps in the world. Why it was selected I do not know—It is impossible to get any general view of Winchester unless one tears down a lot of houses and trees. It is in a hollow and the west front, of which I made a drawing, is not as high as a three story house. I want to have the series as good as you do, but it is not very encouraging or conducive to good work to get letters like the last two I have had from you.

Criticism came from Fisher Unwin as well, and from Pennell a further answer, also appropriately quoted here:

TO W. LEWIS FRASER

As to your practical criticisms of Winchester—"on page 265"—the drawing was made in 1885—and I believe untold vandalisms have been committed in Winchester since then. These drawings have no pretention—to the "egstre speeshul eedetion" style of work. If the long walk up to the west door of the Cathedral isent known, it is but another proof of the blindness of people who travel a road every day without seeing it—of course it is there.

As to the final one—the fact that I dident advertise somebody's shop but put up another name—could it have been the bookseller's shop?—it is but the evidence that another dam fool has been heard from. I used to have a choice collection of such things. The only thing that amuses me is the coincidence that the name Tanner ever was there at all—unless it *was* there when I made the drawing.

The drawings at Winchester finished, we cycled on, through the New Forest, to Salisbury. As "an overgrown toy", the Cathedral struck him. "You feel as if you would like to pick it up and put it away in its box." It was too perfect in his eyes, though as always, there was a little river and pleasant walks to take along the banks, and, as almost always, there was the beautiful close in which the English Cathedral barricades itself against the contamination of the town.

CHAPTER XII

A CANTERBURY PILGRIMAGE · ENGLISH CATHEDRALS · RETURN TO LONDON (1885–1886)

"A Canterbury Pilgrimage" was published while we were in Winchester, and in Salisbury we got our first notice the first morning when we opened the *Daily News* and found Andrew Lang's leader given to "The Most Wonderful Shilling's Worth Modern Literature has to Offer." It may not to-day be easy to understand why, but Lang's leaders in the Eighties were considered a guarantee of fame and fortune to the author honoured. If "A Canterbury Pilgrimage" was an immediate success, as it was, he undoubtedly helped to make it one, though he was not wholly responsible. It appealed to two publics: to the cycling public at a period when cycling was the popular sport; to the scholarly public as a tribute to Chaucer and his Pilgrims. Moreover, paper covers were not as common in England as in France, and these, together with the unusual proportions and design of the book, made it conspicuous on railway bookstalls and in bookshop windows. The price, one shilling, attracted a larger public. Letters poured in upon us, from friends and strangers alike. And I felt as if we must be authorities despite ourselves when I got back in London and in the Reading Room of the British Museum Doctor F. J. Furnivall, Chaucer scholar and cyclist,

asked Doctor Garnett to introduce him, and covered me with confusion by his enthusiasm. We made a hit, no mistake, and it was great fun. I remember our walks to Essex Street to see how our first book looked in the publisher's windows. Pennell, again in Salisbury, wrote me what happened to him, also his frank impressions of Mrs. Van Rensselaer who had ideas for the Cathedral which were not his. Ingram, to whom he refers, was the editor of the series in which my "Mary Wollstonecraft", cruelly cut down by the editorial hand, appeared in England. Etherington was a cycling celebrity of the day and Iliffe a cycling publisher.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Dear *Pen*

We are famous—book was on R.R. stall—Some feller bought one copy, and I bought the other, and there aint any more—and then I went into the book store and appears the Proprietor. And are you the author of "this charming etc—

blushes, etc
h' I h'am
Tableau

Scene—Enter landlord perusing *Canterbury Pilgrimage* and utterly unable to make anything out of it—confronts me—

Grand tableau

Act last (so far)

Enter an unknown bearing C.P. J.P. discovered hunting for puffs in *Standard* and not finding 'em.

And do I see before me . . . . . .

You bet you do . . . . . .

. . . . . .

Well, just sign your name to it—and lets go and get a drink—Curtain.

Joseph and Elizabeth Robins
Pennell

A
Canterbury
Pilgrimage

London
Seeley & Co., Esser St.
MDCCLXXXV. One Shilling.

TITLE PAGE OF A CANTERBURY PILGRIMAGE

Designed by Joseph Pennell

Dont you bother about Ingram. Mrs. V. R. has risen and explained—Of course Howells means Duveneck, and I want to get out a *nox* and beat him and *we can do it*. Get the parent to come, both on 'em, and I'll stay here till Monday.

Jo

Sarum

Pen Dear, I send on all the notices Ive got.—I am working on some pen drawings—and have recd some more letters from Mrs. V. R. in the last of which she calmly informs me that she and some architect named Godwin have settled what *I* am to do—and on the strength of which I sat me down and wrote her a ten page letter nice and friendly—for I told her distinctly what I had done and what from *my* point of view I proposed doing—and then suggested a confab—Women have more cheek—

I want some money.

Salisbury.9.22

Dear *Pen*—I sent Seeley's letter to Iliffe's along with a copy of one I wrote Etherington telling him I wasnt aware that he had any interest in the book—but apparently he has taken more interest in it—than Iliffe and *The Cyclist* for that eminently respectable—journal dosnt even contain so much as an advertisement—Whether they have been so much shocked—as to cut that out I dont know but I do know that if we get any more books out we will simply ignore the whole lot of them. These squabbles and the toothache and a face like this have knocked all desire for work out of me and I think I

[Drawing]

shall come home in a day or so—and I shant stay in C.T.C. houses any more for there are too many people around and the consequence is that I dont get any work done—

Then again I suppose Mrs. V. R. will be mad—and generally I feel like going on a desert island—and you, have you heard from Ingram or anybody—

At the end of the month he allowed himself a distraction not on a desert island for which he was not in

the least qualified, but at Harrogate to take part in a big cycling meet and cycling races and a cycling parade that recalled Germantown days. Everybody had seen "The Pilgrimage", most had read it. This interruption was refreshing in the middle of his hard-working summer.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

North Eastern Station Hotel
Harrogate

Dear *Pen*

Wont this letter from R. Louis [R. Louis Stevenson to whom we had dedicated *A Canterbury Pilgrimage*] do—and here's another puff. Everybody here has been very nice too. All the sensible fellows actually have heard of the thing—and stranger yet they have bought it. Sturmey says *The Cyclist* shall have another notice of it—Shipton means well but he is an idiot.

J. S. Dean 'an Yank' who is here, a very decent fellow, is going to write it up for the *Wheel World*—I *have explained* to him where the sarcasm comes in and I think we shall have something funny anyway.

I dont believe we shall sell a copy here—

Am off for the Camp—
Jo

Dear *Pen*

Dont think a single copy of the C.P. was sold at Harrogate—but everyone knew of it—and it seems to be all over the place, anyway I went to the races, rode in the procession—and made a fool out of myself generally—had a big dinner and no end of drinks—spouted some idiotic stuff which, was received with musical honours or something of that sort—anyway had a good time.

With the Atlantic between, he hoped to be out of reach of the *Century's* requests to go here, there, or

everywhere at a minute's notice to make an odd drawing or two by return of post. But Fraser was in London during August with a list of articles marked "immediate"—more immediate than the Cathedrals. One was on the Plantin Museum, Antwerp, by Theodore de Vinne, printer of the *Century*, and Drake was in "a very great hurry" for the illustrations because *Harper's* was rumoured to have its eye on the Plantin. A second was by Doctor (later Sir) Norman Moore, Warden of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, on old St. Bartholomew's, the oldest church in London, older than the oldest Cathedral on the list, and therefore calling for precedence. William Morris' workshops at Merton Abbey were a picturesque experiment bound any day to be discovered by an enterprising rival and the *Century* must get in first with them, as with everything else. And, really, it would be disgraceful to delay longer the illustrations for Doctor Eggleston's "Out of the Ways in High Savoy." More than once we wished Fraser safely back in his Union Square office, New York City.

All this urgent work could not be done in what remained of outdoor weather. It was a question of choice. Pennell's was, first for Merton Abbey, because, less difficult, it would take less time than St. Bartholemew's. And it made up a little for the interruption when Fraser pronounced the Merton Abbey drawings, done in charcoal grey, and some of the Cathedral drawings in the same medium, to be Pennell's very best.

After Merton the decision was for High Savoy which, if a journey had to be made, was an excellent excuse for us to cycle, as we longed to, across France on its

good poplar-lined roads, from Calais into Switzerland. The Merton drawings were done and sent off. We bought

a new tandem, we borrowed Sterne's route to save the trouble of mapping out one for ourselves, and, despatching "the parent" and the aunt to Edinburgh with friends, we started, August thirtieth, on "Our Sentimental Journey." When, at the end of it, Pennell tramped off on foot with High Savoy as his goal, I waited in a pension among orchards above Villeneuve on Lake Geneva. One post card from St. Jean d'Aulph recorded the first of his many adventures of a similar kind: "Got here last night after being arrested as a Prussian, etc. etc. etc. J.P."

Cathedrals still to be drawn were mostly in small towns, each within its green enclosure, streams and

meadows close by; never so beautiful therefore as in spring and summer. The winter of 1885–1886 was spent at Number 36 Bedford Place because again time could not be spared to hunt for other lodgings. We settled down into London life like old Londoners, astonished more than anybody else at the number of our friends and social engagements. One of the houses now added to the many hospitably opened to us on our arrival was Edmund Gosse's. Gosse then held a government post at the Board of Trade. He was also poet, essayist, lecturer, critic. Few literary men worked harder than he throughout the week. Sunday he reserved for recreation and, according to his code, recreation was seeing his friends and meeting interesting people to whom he was at home on Sunday afternoon at the tea hour. Usually a chosen few stayed on to Sunday evening supper, when he shone as host and talker. The world would gain if on these occasions a Boswell, later to disclose himself, was at his elbow. In no house in London did one meet more worth-while people and hear such good talk. Thomas Hardy, Walter Pater—"looks like a prize fighter out of training" Pennell said—Andrew Lang, Coventry Patmore—Alice Meynell in those days seldom absent from his spoken thoughts—Rider Haggard, Robert Ross, Fitzmaurice Kelly, Maarten Maartens from Holland, Walter Raleigh, Charles Whibley—were off and on constant in attendance. Americans were almost as many—Oliver Wendell Holmes—once for a crowded evening reception, Henry James, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Henry Harland, Brander Matthews, Wolcott Balestier, delightful Harriet Waters Preston, scarcely remembered now—"Sparkling Harriet",

Gosse's name for her. And always a plentiful sprinkling of artists—Academicians: Alma-Tadema, Frank Dicksee, Hamo Thornycroft, Marcus Stone, the popular favourite of a short day, Onslow Ford; younger men soon—or never—to write R.A. after their names: Sargent, Abbey, Millet, John Alexander, Fred Barnard, Blake Wirgman, Alfred Parsons. And always Gosse had a talent for attracting the younger men. If an older friend dropped out, a new genius stepped in. Supper was informal, cold with wine to warm it. Evening dress was not possible except for late comers, and the result was an ease not usual at English social gatherings—no sudden silences, no embarrassed pauses. Gosse and Mrs. [now Lady] Gosse, unlike most English hosts, introduced everybody to everybody; the friendly atmosphere round the supper table encouraged that good talk of which Gosse was master: his humour delicate, his fun spontaneous, his knowledge providing the apt quotation and reference, his stories and amusing gossip without end. Pennell went often until the days when he seldom went anywhere, preferring to collect his friends about him in his own place.

We were seeing a great deal of Doctor Furnivall in his St. George's Square house, at evenings of Browning and Shakespeare societies, at Shelley and Browning plays with the tickets he was forever sending us. He and Pennell met also at cycling dinners and meetings, for he was an ardent cyclist, though not popular among wheelmen, that winter damning himself with them by refusing to drink the health of the queen. Why should he?—he was a republican, was his explanation to us. He was a man of distinct personality, strong character—

that is why we liked him. He was fearless, disdained the conventions, would go about London on a hot day with his coat over his arm and without a hat, and the hatless fad had not then been invented. He did not hesitate to say what he thought, with extraordinary extravagance. He was extravagant in most things—except money, of which he had a limited amount. His friendliness was genuine, but he overdid it, embarrassing you with the paragraphs of fulsome praise he sent to the literary papers. If he disliked you, it was wholeheartedly, as in the case of Gosse. He knew no half measures, was in dead earnest when he called Gosse a humbug, while Gosse took the one-sided feud lightly, roared with joy when Furnivall protested that the "Cenci" would be performed "in spite of all the Tuppers and the Gosses." We agreed with Mrs. Richard Garnett when she described Doctor Furnivall as "something unique."

For a while the Sunday evenings when we did not go to Delamere Terrace or St. George's Square were spent in Hammersmith. Pennell's London print dealer at that time was Robert Dunthorne in Vigo Street, and associated with Dunthorne was his brother-in-law Emery Walker, a follower of William Morris. Walker lived in Hammersmith Terrace overlooking a quiet reach of the Thames, and had for neighbour Ernest Radford, a budding minor poet and professed socialist, whom we met at Doctor Furnivall's. Either Walker or Radford would ask us to Sunday afternoon tea and after tea take us to the socialist meetings Morris presided over in the little barnlike building adjoining Kelmscott House on the near-by Mall.

Pennell was interested, he had an open mind, he did not find the world as it was so perfect as to be beyond improvement. Besides, socialism, revolt, discontent, call it what you will, was in the air. Often, on Sunday afternoons, we listened to agitators at the meetings in Hyde Park where John Burns denounced the Government, and we saw something that autumn of the unemployed's window-smashing along Piccadilly, through Mayfair, down Oxford Street. We found the Hammersmith services amusing as a novelty but not convincing as propaganda. Labour was not overwhelmingly in evidence, though things were a trifle better than at the Fabians', where rejoicing over the capture of one real working man turned to sadness upon his first appearance at their meetings in a flashy, reach-me-down suit. At Hammersmith we began to suspect that socialists could boast an aristocracy when through the door communicating with the house Morris and his daughter, Miss May Morris, would appear with something of state, accompanied by favoured "comrades", usually Halliday Sparling, whom Miss Morris afterwards married, and George Bernard Shaw, young, virtually unknown—though that he ever was unknown seems to-day impossible.

The speaking, with the exception of Shaw's, was not good, not stimulating. Morris was charmingly picturesque, short, sturdy, bearded, in his blue reefer suit and blue shirt not unlike a sea captain off duty. His thick curly hair was massed above his forehead and always in confusion because of his habit of running his hands through it in moments of excitement, and oftener than not he was excited. He was weak in argument. In

amiable mood, his retort to the straying sheep might be, "My comrade does not believe it in his heart." But, as a rule, he lost his temper and said nasty things. At one long-remembered meeting he worked himself up to the verge of apoplexy, calling his opponent every possible bad name, lost his voice in the process and did not recover it all evening. Radford talked like the condescending University man, Sparling like a romantic schoolgirl. Walker could not speak and wisely did not. The working men and clerks, overpowered by their superior leaders, seldom opened their mouths. Walter Crane occasionally appeared, had his place with the elect, but he was, if anything, the worst speaker of them all. Shaw had it his own way and made the most of it. He was amazingly clever, logical, paradoxical, fluent, forcing you to listen to him, though seldom to agree with him. We had never heard of him before, were entirely unprejudiced, but it struck us that he was talking for the practice it gave rather than from interest in socialism. We may have been mistaken. Morris asked us to supper after the meetings, apparently only a select few of the comrades being admitted to his beautiful eighteenth-century dining room with the Rossettis on the walls. Sometimes we went home with Shaw in the Underground—he did not live far from us—arguing all the way back. We were so faithful in attendance at first that Gosse took delight in calling us "wretched socialist agitators." But we got nothing out of it, remained unconvinced. The meetings grew monotonous, we went less often, gradually we were dropped. We were a disappointment to the comrades who had hoped to gather us into the fold. Even Morris wearied before long of his propa-

ganda and was heard to say that, if ever he lectured again, it would be on the Norse Sagas.

A distraction more to Pennell's taste was cycling. He had no use for golf or tennis, for chasing a ball through a field or knocking it over a net. He had no sympathy with the hunt of living things, large or small, wild or tame. He got the exhilaration he craved and needed on a wheel, going hard all the time and getting somewhere. Those were the great days of cycling, Karl Kron compiling his big book, Stevens making the world tour on his nickel-plated machine, Canary doing his trick riding on the music-hall stage and at cycling entertainments. As in Philadelphia, Pennell plunged into the politics and social amenities of the sport. He belonged to the Cyclists' Touring Club, was an official on its Council. He was a Fellow of the Society of Cyclists, Doctor Benjamin Ward Richardson's society, solemn as its founder, with scientific aspirations, just what or why nobody could say. Ceremonious meetings were held once a fortnight. Pennell went regularly at the start, hopeful of entertainment or profit, often speaking, actually raising a ripple of laughter in the decorous, serious assembly. But for him the end came the evening one of the Fellows read a paper on the close and scientific relation of cycling to cameo cutting and rose grafting. That was the limit. He joined the Pickwick Club, its sole distinction the christening of each member after a character in "Pickwick"—he was Mr. Potts. In spring and summer the Club organized short tours and often he rode with the rest and got some pleasure out of it. He attended cycling dinners, made speeches, took the popular Sunday run to Ripley, ate the popular Sunday

dinner at the Anchor. Cycling was the only form of exercise he allowed himself and for him it was a splendid tonic.

Work went steadily on. Winchester and Salisbury drawings were finished, St. Paul's begun. The illustrations for St. Bartholomew's were made and through them we added Doctor and Mrs. Norman Moore to our growing list of friends. We often dined with them in their picturesque, weather-battered, time-stained house within the Hospital precincts, its front door opening on Little Britain. Pennell was brimful of ideas. He decided to write an article about his tramp over Doctor Eggleston's route, to be called "An Illustrator on the Track of an Author", the first suggestion for his book "The Adventures of an Illustrator", written and published forty years later.

"Had another idea," he wrote me from Canterbury, "why shouldn't we write a big book on Pen Drawing—something in the style of *Etching and Etchers*—illustrated with stunning pen drawings well reproduced," and that book, entirely his in the end, was not kept waiting so long. The first edition came out in 1889. He asked Miss Preston, translator of Mistral's "Miréio", to propose to Gilder articles on Provence with him as illustrator, he proposed for ourselves "An American Pilgrimage", and Gilder agreed enthusiastically to both proposals. He was finding a publisher for "Italy from a Tricycle"—the articles came out that winter in the *Century*—and eventually Seeley took the book for England, Roberts Brothers for America. He was firing Andrew Lang with a scheme for a sporting magazine, the two going together to offer it to the Longmans, who

were considering "Our Sentimental Journey", and for whom he was making drawings to illustrate Viscount Bury's book on cycling. He was etching occasionally, wandering with his plates through London from Charing Cross to Cherry Gardens, going to Brooker for the printing, but contributing only one print, "Mammie Sauerkraut's Row", to the Fifth Annual Exhibition of the Painter-Etchers. Commissions followed each other fast, an article on the Charterhouse for the *Magazine of Art;* an article on "The Guilds of London" for the *Century*. It seems incredible, on looking back, that any man could have worked so hard, thought so hard, played so hard in so short a space of time.

Among the many articles commissioned was one that spelled failure, not surprising in the light of his later prejudices, for it was inspired by the theatre. On Christmas Eve (1885) he came home laden with Christmas gifts, among them tickets for two good seats at the Lyceum where Irving and Ellen Terry were playing "Faust." As a play it seemed to us melodrama, adapted to Irving's mannerisms and mouthings. But the scenery, in the realistic fashion of the period, was effective, based upon the architecture of Nuremberg. As always, when attracted by a subject, Pennell's first thought was, Why not an article for the *Century?* I could describe the scenery, he could illustrate it. The *Century* said "yes." Irving was charming—Pennell was to use the theatre as if it was his. We were given stalls, given boxes, tea was sent in for our friends. Pennell had the run of the stage and the greenroom. He went night after night, began drawing after drawing, made many notes. He got nothing out of it. He was not what was called "a figure

man." He asked for another artist to collaborate and Blake Wirgman joined him, sketching Irving posing, Ellen Terry posing, George Alexander posing, witches and angels posing. But in the end no drawings appeared in the *Century*, though my article on the scenery did, followed by a slashing criticism of play and players, unsigned, but nobody could doubt that its author was Henry James. I doubt if Irving and Ellen Terry ever forgave us. As for Pennell, he saw the business of the drama behind the scenes until he could no longer see the art, and it was with the utmost reluctance that he ever entered a theatre again.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PLANTIN MUSEUM · AN INTERLUDE ON THE SAÔNE (1886)

With the first breath of spring, in 1886, the Cathedrals summoned Pennell to Canterbury. He asked little of life save the opportunity to draw beautiful things and to be left in peace while drawing them. But not much peace was to be had in Canterbury. The *Century* cabled "Postpone the Cathedral for the Plantin Museum which is wanted at once." Philip Gilbert Hamerton wrote "Join me in my boat down the Saône from its source to Lyons, to do an illustrated book." Pennell knew Hamerton's work, was influenced by it in his student days. He remembered the encouragement received from the older man, whose praise of his "Ponte Vecchio", sent him from Florence in 1883, was in contrast to the silence of Ruskin, to whom also a print had been sent the same winter. Hamerton published the *Little Venice* plate in his book on Landscape, rarely refused an etching or a drawing for the *Portfolio*, which he edited from his house in Autun, and Pennell took it as a compliment to be asked to collaborate. Hamerton was much better equipped than the other critics of his time, Pennell thought, and, indeed, than those who immediately followed. In Devitt Welsh's copy of "A Summer Voyage on the Saône," he wrote: "A book by a man who was

in many ways a better critic than many of his successors." We had seen something of the beauty of the rivers and canals of France on "Our Sentimental Journey" and he was sorely tempted. Gilder wrote "go, though it's a funny way of taking a holiday." On the other hand, the Cathedrals waited. It was difficult to decide. The indecision told on his nerves; drawing in Canterbury's dark corners told on his eyes. Half the time he could not work. One day he reported, "I've done four or five things and shall probably tear them nearly all up", the next, "got on very well to-day—made a jolly sketch of a place in the rain." And then, with a suddenness characteristic of him, he was back in London and off to Antwerp, afterwards to the Saône. His letters from Antwerp, seldom dated, are practically a daily journal.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

The place itself is stunning—only I wish you were here to see it—and you shall be and we will stay in a wee bit of a hotel I know of right under the shadow of the Cathedral where the bells *chime* so wonderfully every little while—we *will* do these Continental Cathedrals—If I can only get the English ones good enough—they—the *waiters*—say there is good music at 10 in the Cathedral and I am going—and then to the Museum to see the Rubens—everything is Rubens here—

Ive been around all day in the Cathedral and at the Museum where there are any amount of sprawling Rubenses—each one worse than the other—only one stunning little sketch of the *Descent from the Cross*—but such a Franz Hals and a himmelschön!!! Rembrandt—and a bad Titian—I dont care a red for the whole lot of these Flemings though Franz Hals was one.

I really am glad you dont like Lang's book [*The Mark of Cain*]—*I dident believe* he could do anything original—and I dident want this belief smashed—as the O'Donahue was broken—When does the

Robinson shine come off, You are to go—if I have to come home to take you—Do you mind my growling, Write to the bankers. . . . .

. . . . . The museum is wonderfully fine—but I am wonderfully blue—my eyes hurt—and all the time—I long to go off with Hamerton—but I wont—I've had no letters yet.

The Cathedral is a proper one but the inside is like a barn—the *Descent from the Cross* I dident get up an enthusiasm for—nor other big Rubens—but again the museum Plantin is stunning—but I do wish you were here—and we would have less swellness and more good times. . . .

I have four or five drawings done—and really feel now that it would be better to go. I know the trip will brighten me up for I am awfully down and then, as I have written Hamerton, it will in a certain way be easy—no architectural or interior or mechanical business and *those* are the things from which I want a rest—Then if anything *does happen* with *The Century* I can come back and I shall still have July, Aug—Sept. and Oct for the Cathedrals and shall be better able to do them.

This is the loneliest place Ive been in yet—fancy eating a *table d'hôte* dinner by yourself—ugh!! its awful to be *tout seul* as the waiter remarked—as Fraser blandly admits this article is to lead up to a puff for De Vinne—I shall stay as short a time as I can and send them a 25 franc book of photos—I am getting sick of this sort of thing.

It is beautiful, the interior of the museum—but though I appreciate its beauty I hate to draw it. . .

. . . . . Absolutely nothing happened—I have done a pretty drawing and interested the Dutchmen—with one of whom, a very decent fellow, I went this afternoon and saw a wonderful Brewers Hall—and a *himmelschön*—the *himmelschönest* stairway I ever saw, all carved from top to bottom with a jolly old Pope for one banister and the Virgin atop and a beautiful lamp over all.

To-day I had another nice *lil* from Hamerton who says they are "making arrangements with another artist to come in case you are unable—but I hope you will manage it—" He also says I can lie

down *at* any time. Fancy—and there are to be two books and he is going to write an article for *The Century* which will be very good and interesting—Of course what Gilder thinks is of no importance—and I can illustrate it. Fancy. . . . ."

Rosy Dutchmen who are almost as bad as the copyists of Italy occupy all the decent places in the museum—for life apparently—at any rate they are there before I go—and when I come away—and to prevent me from getting their seats—bring sandwiches in their coat tail pockets—The only thing they condescend to say about my work is to marvel at the rapidity with which it is done. I wish I could afford to be a painter—this is the most glorious place for sunsets and —five o'clock is the time to dine for one then has three hours to take them in and the light of them is like that night at Rives only instead of shining on the mountains—the Cathedral is transfigured and hotels become things of beauty—But you shall see it all next summer —or some time So good night.

There are about a dozen waiters standing round looking at me write with my left hand and it is past 8 o'clock and I am sitting in the *Place Verte*—I was worried, supposed something had happened—because you said you would tell me everything—well you had a lot to tell—Gosse wrote too—also Hamerton—isn't he sweet and fatherly—"I ll never regret going with him"—Do you know Ive thought it would be a scheme to write up my wanderings with great men—Cable in the Gulf of Mexico, Howells in Italy and Hamerton—one article—I think it would make something—Well? . . . I am very glad you are going to the Gosses to-night and Langs to-morrow and Robinsons whenever their shine is—for if you dont go what is the use of your being in London? Of course there is no use going everywhere but if you dont go to places like these you will wish you had some day. . . . There are only three more drawings to do—so I shall get away Thursday or Friday—

It has been awfully hard work here—just grinding—grinding—and yet the place is so beautiful—but I am played out—and I do think this Hamerton business will set me up—a letter from him to-

day in which he wants *you* too to come to Autun and see his wife—Still I would sooner be home in London to-morrow—I am quite sure Fraser wont like these things but in the future they can get some one else to do their running round—he has worried me almost to death in the last year—and I shant stand it any longer—Its a mighty different state of things sitting in one's office—and telling somebody to write a letter, to order some one else (me) to do something—to being that one. How was the Gosses'? Hamerton's boat is being taken up by a steam tug—thats luxury—I wish we could afford to be an author—a *lil* came from Walter Crane who seems to have taken to me—wants me to come to see him when I come back and join their Guild.

All drawings have gone to Fraser and I shall go to-morrow I wish you were here to-night—I've fallen in love with this Cathedral and we must do it somehow—There's one narrow street over which the town hangs, so that when you look up at it—it frightens you. But you shall see it soon.

Pennell was to meet Hamerton and Captain Kornsprobst, the third of the party, at Gray. Their journey was to be on a *berrichon*, a French canal boat—the *Boussemroum* its high-sounding name—which could not be sailed or poled or pushed upstream and therefore a steam tug had been hired which was to pick him up at Gray, go up the river to Corre, where the real start would be made. Pennell always thought it would be amusing for him to write his story of the expedition and he did, delightfully, for the *New York Times Magazine* in 1925 and again in his "Adventures." Hamerton's version is dull, serious, pompous, "Mr. Pennell" in it, with his stilted talk, scarcely recognizable as the real Pennell who, whatever he may have been, was never stilted. The best record of all, a record with the freshness and gaiety of first impressions, is in his daily

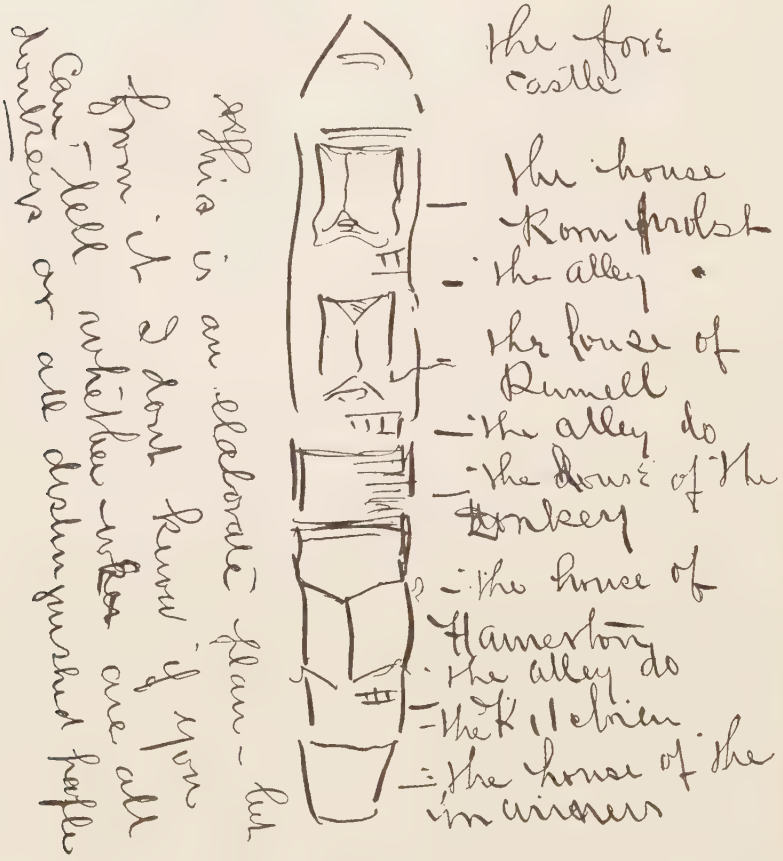
journal to me. One line came from Paris: "Had a *bad* dinner—and going on in half an hour," and then a longer report from Gray.

Gray. 6. 4. 86

Kamli Pen—I am here wherever here is and I got your letter of June 2d just as I was leaving—and I had heard a glorious Mass in the Cathedral—you do hear music in Antwerp—But Hamerton isent here and I dont know anything about him save that he has started and that he is being towed up by a steam tug—*quel* swell—and that here he must '*abandon le toug bot—et prendre un homme ou une âne*'—so the M. Mathey to whom he gave me a letter and who is a very decent fellow—he wanted to treat me to champagne—but I wouldn't have it—told me—but I went to work and made two sketches this afternoon so that by the time Hamerton comes if he hasent already gone to the bottom I shall be ready to go on—you should hear me talk French now—I say anything—English is unknown, also the tourist in this part of creation. This is a pretty picturesque place (the whole *café* is admiring my writing with my left hand—they are paralyzed). But the river itself is lovely, the town has a sort of Spanish look. I noticed the courtyards before M. Mathey told me it was under Spanish rule for some time—what the Spaniards were doing here I dont know. But I *do* know that Ive had an immense dinner—shad roe and mushrooms on toast—*par exemple*—and I dont know what I am to pay but as the room is only 2 francs dont believe it will be riotous—especially as it is full of commercials—only I wish you were here—and the tricycle roads perfect and lots of machines about—I feel *immensely better* whether owing to the *vin à discretion*—or the fact that I dident sleep last night I dont know—but I only know I wish we had money enough to spend half our time loafing round on the Continent or rather in France and Italy—maybe we will one day.

Weve got off and are somewhere on the river—I loafed around in Gray for a day and then it got rainy and I got blue and late in the day after I was tired of prancing up and down between the town and river—a fleet arrived and from it emerged an individual in white,

and red beard, old hat, and white umbrella, and general disreputability—and this was P. G. H. He is certainly very nice. But the boat is like this


the fore castle
the house
Rom probst
the alley
the house of Pennell
the alley do
the house of the donkey
the house of Hamerton
the alley do
the Kitchen
the house of the incineers
This is an elaborate plan - but from it I dont know if you can tell whether we are all drowned or all drunkards

We are being towed up the stream in gorgeous style and expect to arrive at the top to-night—if we dont smash up—though the tug has broken down or run into a bridge—and weve already *lost* a man—overboard on to the towing path but he will probably catch up. The country really is lovely and simple—we found last night a charming village—From the plan you will see we are altogether independent

of hotels as there are two men and the Donkey to look after us—and as is always the case I have become utterly imbecile and am sprawling on the deck and sleeping—but I shall probably wake up when we get to the top—You should see me make my bed in the morning—it is lovely.

Corre—11—I think
day unknown

Kamli Pen—We havent got away yet—have been fixing the boat up—it is now gorgeous—but the *marinier* has took sick—having taken too much and we are now waiting for him to recover—Yesterday we had a mutiny—I dont know what it was all about—it being conducted in some vile lingo—but all was soon settled—as to loafing and picnicking—I havent had much—I get up at *4* A.M., make my bed, and go at it—to-day I did two drawings and an etching but—these things are just what I like—and Hamerton enthuses over what I do—but I am going to make something important out of the things and it will be all the better for me—At 7 I return to the boat and we have soup—coffee never—then at it again till eleven—and then such a *déjeuner*—and then we loaf for a while unable to do anything else and then more work and then dinner and bed—we all, as I told you, sleep in tents—and the other morning I woke up and found a small lake in the bed with me, but beyond getting a bath, I dont see that anything serious has happened. Hamerton is really very decent—also the Captain—*we all* talk French in the most lovely manner—you should hear me—you probably will hear of me—Hamerton has a wrinkle which you should adopt—he writes his Mss. in pencil—his *final copy*—and under it he puts a piece of the black transfer paper used in all stores and another sheet of paper under that and the result is *two copies*—Do you understand—if not look in any shop and you will see it done—I am very curious to see what the book is like for, as far as I can see, he never makes any notes—But I dont think he can compare with Stevenson—and, by the way, he too has the *Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey* on board.

My eyes are much better, they dident hurt me at all to-day when I was etching which is an extremely good sign—I think it was

worrying which made them go wrong—but I am now going to stop writing by candle light in my cabin on the Saône—this is stupid but Ive had too much dinner—too much wine—too much kirsch—and now I am going to post this and go to bed, so good night—and when I shall be home I dont know

Jo

Oh dear Ive found two sheets of paper stuck together—and they must be filled—So—at first I dident like the arrangement at all—sleeping in a tent with a donkey looking in at me but now I have gotten used to it and a beautiful blue and white awning has been put up between me and him—and he wails melodiously behind it—At Gray the Frenchman to whom Hamerton wrote was very nice—he took me all over the town—and I drew in one courtyard where the people—as usual—tried to make me out a Prusse but dident succeed—and then he, M. Mathey, to whose care you are writing, asked me to dinner—he had an ugly wife—and a new baby—and we sat in the bedroom till dinner—which was awfully good—was ready—then we had music in a room ten feet square—and then in the course of time I got away—but only fancy me taking dinner with a French family. I wonder what I said. I havent hardly any idea what we talked about—

Port sur Saône Monday. We have come six kilos to-day—drifting in various ways—very beautiful—very well—very lazy.

Day—Date and name of place unknown—all I know is—its the most stunning region I ever struck—old *châteaux*, towers—and a lovely river. H. is still O.K.

Conflondey. We are doing our usual ten kilos a day—everything lovely except the weather—it rains every day but the tents are dry—at this rate we will reach Gray in a week as we have made just 50 K in that time—and Lyons when?

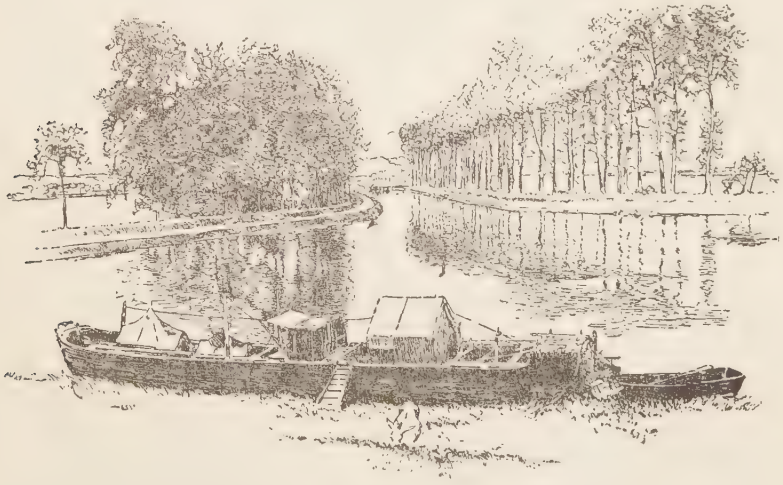
Gray, Sunday. 20

I cant enthuse over H. as much as Howells or Cable—he has fits of being queer—in fact I dont think he is unlike me *especially* when

I am nasty—he is an English crank—that's all—but I let him alone and seek the seclusion of my tent and work when I can—

The men on the boat fight each other all the time and there are no end of rows but I dont wonder for the last two days we have pushed—the men have—down stream and I dont know when we shall get through. Hamerton also wants to make a portfolio of twelve of my drawings and have them photogravured and he says he is going to do it—The Captain is harmless and looks after the marketing and dinners and runs things etc.—I believe the expense will be about 4 francs a day—not extravagant but I long for the hotels and he hates them—In many ways he is like us for he abominates sprees etc—and London—

Hamerton makes me talk French—fancy—and corrects me until my life is a burden but he says I am learning. He has read me a lot of the Mss. and I think it infernally stupid—what the artist said—and what the Captain said—sort of stuff. Still he is a gun I suppose—but— . . . . You should see those canals. They are like rivers running through parks—the most beautiful things I ever saw.



Gray—We are going to give a dinner to-night to those people who gave us one so all my things have been cleared up—I am as usual in

despair—its all very well to receive dinners—but to give them—Oh!! Everybody O.K.

Gray. 6. 22.
Dear *Kamli Pen*—Our fête has come and gone—it wasent so bad—we fixed H.'s cabin up with tin lamps—and flowers, bought some extra chairs—and he insisted on having decent knives and forks—and the dinner wasent bad—but I got away as soon as I could get M. Mathey who had got outside of much *vin ordinaire*—some *bon vin*—some cognac—some grog—and a lot of kirsch—home—I went to bed but I believe the rest stayed up till some time this morning—

Pontaillier, 24th. June—Boat donkey—Drawings—and us all arrested—and tied up to a bank in the shade—as soon as anything happens will let you know—see *Daily News* to-morrow.

The Saône is not far from the German frontier, the Franco-German war was not many years away, anything like their boat had probably never been seen on the river. Pennell, all unwittingly, strengthened suspicion. At Gray, people who visited the boat out of curiosity asked him, "*Monsieur tire des plans?*" And he, to get off the time-honoured joke, answered "*Non, moi je travaille pour le roi de Prusse*", which, from a fellow Frenchman would have meant, "I work for nothing." From a foreigner, what could be more suspicious? News of their journey went before them down the river. Gendarmes inspected them at Verdun-sur-Doubs. Fortunately, the military official at Pontaillier to whom their drawings and papers were submitted had some intelligence. He let them go on, but they were under surveillance through a country where the most innocent traveller was not allowed to draw a fort, and forts were not always recognized by the innocent. The story continues in post cards and letters.

St. Jean de Losnes. Escaped police—and have gotten safely here by the aid of tug boats. Donkey done up.

Starting for Châlons this afternoon—been arrested again but are going to cut—this getting arrested is a bore.

Châlons—sur Saône. Got here at last. I am going on by steamboat will write. H. going home.

Lyons—in the big *Place* at a *café*—under a tree—waiting for the music to begin and wishing you were here.

July 1st.

Miri Kamli—I came down from Châlons to-day where I got a lot of your dear letters—you do help me along with them—I left Hamerton this morning—and the scow. He wanted me to come to his house but I shant. I think I shall probably walk back to Macon by the riverside, its only about 75 K and lovely all the way and as I should otherwise be arrested several times a day—H. has gotten me a permit from the Minister of War and the Prefects of Several Departments—so I shall probably get through—and home I hope in about ten days. He has gone back to Autun—if he hadent been an Englishman he would have completed the book at Châlons where we gave the boat up—but no, it must be the navigable Saône no matter how disappointing or big and bulky—and I expect—stupid it will be. I dident have a good time for we neither of us understood the other—I dident "talk big" and so he gave me good advice at times and ignored me at others and dragged me about to see people and things I dident care for—but he was very kind and I think meant well but he is as badly gone on boating as I am on cycling—and I think I must bore you sometimes with it.

Châlons sur Saône—
July 2

Kicked out of Lyons—Certificates from sub Prefects, Mayors—*Officiers d'Académie*—no good and after visiting all sorts of places came back here with the intention of being in London on Saturday

night—but Hamerton really begged me to stay and as it will only take a week or so I had better.

This morning Hamerton sent the certificate of my harmlessness to Lyons—I went with it to the Prefect—the Prefect sent me to the Mayor and the Mayor sent me to the Military—and the Military sent word down that they wanted to see my permission from the Minister of War—and as I hadent it and well—I went to the *Dépôt* and a *Gendarme* came and sat in the same carriage until we got some distance out of Lyons—but now Hamerton has written again and in the course of a day or so I shall be able to scribble away in Lyons—And it is in the French papers that we are making plans of rivers and the poor Captain has been plagued to death—these wretched little two-penny republics are abominable—Tonight I am going to Hamerton's brother-in-law to dinner and I hope it will be good for I havent had anything to eat but some coffee since morning—I did want to get home. I really am awfully lonely, not at all satisfied with what I have done—and anxious to get at the Cathedrals again. Either Hamerton is or we are utterly wrong in our ways of making books—but I think it utterly senseless to go on spinning out a book—when it is already full and complete—just to make something long out of it—and to do the whole river.

At Châlons, on July third, he wrote not only to me but to Gilder, as ever full of schemes and suggestions.

Châlons. 7. 3

Kamli Pen—I started for Lyons again this morning but in half an hour I *knew* what I *thought* I had done—made a mistake—it made me so wretched that I came back again and told Hamerton I was going to take the evening train to Paris—and be home tomorrow—where I want to be more than I can tell you. I so disgusted Hamerton by telling him I wouldent come to his house that he never said good-bye—But I can only say that he either hides himself under a vile exterior or else he is one of the greatest frauds I ever saw. I never could tell which and I never shall care to see him again—His friends are bores and his relations utterly commonplace—he has been a thorough disappointment to me and I suppose I have been to him—

but I am going to get something out of this book (which I think will be stupid) even though I lose all the summer and only get £100 for it—but it is the last time I shall ever do any thing of the sort.

TO RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Dear Mr. Gilder

I am very glad you think well of my coming off with Hamerton—I think it has helped me in many ways—despite the fact that I am arrested every day or so which is becoming monotonous—I've written something about it—entirely different from the Savoy & Eggleston business—do you want to see it? And Johnson has seen some of my London etchings—there are only four done but *when* I get a dozen I like he says he thinks they would make something for *The Century*—I am going to write text and submit it to you. This is a subject I have had in my head for a year.

Yours

The many armed, many legged, much arrested Pennell.

Canterbury is all but finished.

Gilder passed this letter on to his Assistant Editor with a note, not erased when the letter came up for sale recently at the Anderson Galleries, New York City:

My dear R.U.J. Will you look into this. We are desperately full you know—When is he going to do his London Guild article, etc. We are in no hurry at all—but don't want to get too, too, too full of new Pennell material.

R.W.G.

He ought to work for a daily and will yet!

Often enough the journalist in Pennell agreed with Gilder that he ought to work for a daily. He knew his ideas were good. But the artist invariably triumphed. Daily journalism, had he tried it, would have bored him to death.

The arrest at Pontaillier made a stir in London. French alarms, German menace, risks for the traveller filled the papers; gossip distorted the affair at polite entertainments. From the American Minister, at his Fourth of July reception, down, everybody talked of it. I was sought out for details, lionized in the absence of the hero. Lang used the incident for leaders, Shaw congratulated me on the fine advertisement. And always Pennell's name was more prominent than Hamerton's. Hamerton did not approve. He wrote letters of explanation which interested nobody. The journey bewildered him in other ways. He could not understand Pennell. He meant to be kind, was full of grandmotherly cares for his artist; arranged before the start the clothes Pennell should bring, urging in addition a life belt; on the journey was solicitous for his health, prescribing rest; at the crisis, entreating him not to give up but to keep on, so that all the illustrations might be his. At the end, discouraged, Hamerton wrote me a *confidential* letter, imploring my influence; he had none whatever, he wrote in his astonishment, though if he had had any, my astonishment would have been greater. Never were two men more unlike; Hamerton stodgy and plodding, Pennell all nerves and energy.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST OF THE ENGLISH CATHEDRALS · WITH DOCTOR JOHNSON TO THE HEBRIDES (1886–1887)

It was as good as a tonic to get back to the Cathedrals, to escape schoolmasterly advice and improving conversation, to regulate his day with nobody's fancies to conform to save his own. At the Falstaff in Canterbury he was welcomed as an old friend of the house. "Ive gotten two other things under way," he wrote me the first day. And the second: "It is so lovely to-night I wish you were here—sat out till dark—and tried so hard to get some of the feeling—and—I cant do anything more than feel it myself."

After Canterbury, London: Seeley to be seen about the Saône reproductions; Longmans about the cycling illustrations and "Our Sentimental Journey"; The *Pall Mall Gazette* about an interview; *Century* details to be talked over with Frank L. Scott, Treasurer, eventually President of the Century Company, and R. U. Johnson, Associate Editor of the magazine, both in London for a month or two. In Mr. Scott's rooms we met T. Fisher Unwin, the new London publisher of the *Century*, the best of friends from that day on, and Henry Norman, some years away from knighthood and baronetcy. London had not recovered from the revelations of its iniquity in Stead's "Maiden Tribute", and Norman,

young, ambitious, seeking a good start in journalism, was one of the few with courage to defend Stead, then Editor of the *Pall Mall*. His reward was a good post on the editorial staff. The interview he suggested was on the Saône incident; for courtesy's sake he submitted it to Hamerton who objected, thought he had better write something himself. The something proved too dull to publish, and Norman, disappointed, left it to Pennell to write in its place anything "Pennellesque." Pennell, about to start for the northern Cathedrals, asked, "Why not 'A Ride to York after Dick Turpin'?" Norman agreed: "The very thing."

Ely and Lincoln were next on our route. Pennell, with a friend, cycled on our tandem to Ely. With his father I trained it to Lincoln, looked up lodgings, arranged to run down to Ely so that, together, we might finish the Turpin adventure. In the meanwhile, the almost daily, rarely dated bulletin began again.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Bell Hotel
High Street Ely
8. 3

Kamli—Got here all right this morning—lovely ride from Cambridge which we wandered our legs off over yesterday—This place is lovely only not so pretty as Canterbury—but there are two charming river views.

I saw a most lovely thing to-night, wind-mills, Cathedral, etc—and this afternoon I tackled a Corot—and came out second best—had a lovely tramp and a lovely one this evening—and heard choristers practising in the dark Lady Chapel—and listened outside.

I dont know what books I want as I am so deep in the Turpin business—we will make something awfully funny of it. Turpin is most proper but the police use horrid swear words.

Got talking to two cyclers to-night about Italy—and they told me there was an article in *The English Illustrated* "by those Pennells" which was all about tricycling in Italy—and how *that Pennell*—did I know his work (I got out of it)—went around with his wife or his sister or *something* all over creation—Now that is better than all the critic stuff. But it sounds so queer—but we must and will go on.

I struggled with the *Corot* all the afternoon and with a windmill all the morning—I got the windmill but the Corot got me—Ill have another shot—

I wish we could spend a year here—Do you know I am beginning to think it would be a good thing to be always in Cathedral towns, —only I am afraid in the end it would be like Venice—nothing—The cyclers left today and as I dident see them left a note, a very decent one, hoping to see me in London. Somehow we do seem to get on with English people—you know they wouldent be so nice to their own people—

It rained like fury all day. . . . This place builds up wonderfully —but I dont see how I can get much out of it in six drawings. I ought to make sixty—I am stupid to-night—nothing but commercials.

Seeley, preparing to print the "Italian Pilgrimage", found it too short and I suggested including our *Portfolio* article, "The Stones of Rome." The conscientiousness of Pennell's views on book-making are in his answer, and also the clearness with which he could think a thing out in writing:

I most certainly DONT like putting the Roman business in to *pad* the book—for that is all it will be—no disrespect to you, however— why should it be 200 pages any more than 400. Still I suppose it must go in—we can fix it somehow and it may get noticed and if it does O.K. I think we might put in something about Italian travelling also, nice and practical for the English taste. Why not, but there is time for that in Lincoln. My only objection is that it is like Steven-

son's Camisards in the Donkey book—padding—still put it in—probably it will be the strongest thing in it—and it may rile Middleton or somebody—Your idea of using it might be good. Say this really was the reason of our Pilgrimage and the disgust at finding things thusly—really I think on thinking and writing this—it is O.K.

Bully for Harpers—

Pray let me know your address. I havent the faintest idea where you are going—had a lovely walk to-night—and hacked out a big drawing to-day—am living here for 7 and 6 a day. Not cheap *but* good.

Kamli—This place is so lovely and I am getting so little out of it—I dont know how long I shall have to stay for every day I see more and more things.

There are only three drawings done but there are about a dozen things I *must* do something with. And I want to get to Lincoln so—because everything about the place will be so different and so massive and towering—Can I draw from the windows?—And here everything so soft and quiet and distant. But you will see it.

Following, occasionally losing Dick Turpin, we rode from Ely to Oldmanchester, Huntington, Stilton, Norman Cross—its cycling inn famous in the Eighties for soft beds and good cooking—Peterborough, Burleigh House, Stamford Town, Grantham, to Lincoln and a halt of almost two months. Our quarters were over a shop in a little gabled house facing the upper market place on the hill, close to the Cathedral gate. The Cathedral was as massive as Pennell hoped, and from every direction it towered on its ridge: above the lower town, the fields, the river, the wide common; from wherever we wandered in the hot August and golden September weather. His work filled the days, proofs of "Our Italian Journey" the evenings. The Cathedral

people left us severely alone after our unfortunate experience, of which I have spoken, with Canon Venables, the Precentor, who lived within the precincts close to the gate, and could not avoid seeing Pennell on his camp stool, making a drawing of the West Front at the hour of the tea to which he had been invited.

At Lincoln he met Charles Edward Mallows, a young architect travelling for the Pugin Scholarship. The Cathedral work was teaching Pennell a great deal and his drawings were growing more elaborate, more learned, more impressive. As his interest increased, he rebelled against the tedium of struggling with architectural perspective. His concern was the beauty of the architecture, not its technical problems. And yet, he believed that to express this beauty the technical problems must be mastered according to technical rules. For the last Cathedrals of the French series he did not want human or mechanical aids. He could depend upon his eyes. But in the beginning, coming to Gothic fresh from the comparative simplicity of Colonial architecture, he was afraid to trust his extraordinary powers of observation. He turned to photographs and abandoned them promptly. They were of so little use that he gave them up altogether, except as notes or reminders, and then he did not trust them too confidently. He knew that Abbey relied upon architectural draughtsmen, he had heard that this was Doré's method also, and Alma Tadema's for his classical perspectives. In Canterbury Pennell experimented with a young architect, not over successfully. Now he watched Mallows at work, realized his ability, asked if he had time to spare. Mallows had and was glad to give it. Pennell would select his point of

view, Mallows would prepare the perspective, and the drawing could be made without the preliminary mechanical labour that has little to do with the interpretation of beauty. Later Pennell wrote that if Mallows helped him with architecture, of which he was completely ignorant, "I taught him how to draw it", and in Mallows' large drawings of architecture Pennell's influence is unmistakable. Mallows was his first student and, like all his intelligent students, was devoted.

Early in October we were again riding after Dick Turpin and following his rival hero, Robin Hood, through Sherwood Forest. At York we parted. At Durham, farther north, Pennell thought it well to finish before winter set in and Mallows went with him. I gather from his first letter that our parting was not peaceful. I cannot remember why, unless because his father complicated our movements, or because Pennell was apt to be irritable at the beginning of a journey or a new piece of work. The journalist in him loved to start on a new enterprise, the artist loved staying quietly in the beautiful place where he happened to be.

46 Old Elvet
Care of
Mrs. Ray

Kamli—Wasent I nasty? I dont think there is any good in me—and you looked so sad at the Station—but I only wish you could come up here and tramp around—this place knocks everything—it is perfect and so has the day been—weve walked from morning to night. We got some lovely rooms—and I spilt a bottle of ink in 'em—for 25 shillings a week *with* a stationery washstand—Fancy—To-morrow I shall start in—Mallows is delighted—we walked all around it—more like Siena than any town I ever was in in England—all stone—building up from the great bridge spanning the river and

the Cathedral atop—I must etch some of these. How would it do to do a drawing or so for Seeley and have you write one of the Summer Sketches for him—Ask him if he would take a pen drawing to reproduce and a picturesque walk around Durham—I know I was so cruel—why do I get so down and worried I dont know and you take it so hard too—but isent it all made up—I'll be good again.

This is the most lovely place yet. Ive been here two days and weve started and gotten *6* drawings well under way and if the weather holds up—I will get on O. K.—and finish the outside sketches to-morrow—And last night we went to the theatre—such a theatre—Oh Lor!!!—penny gaff aint in it.

Getting on stunningly—two more drawings started to-day—and to-morrow night we shall go and see the Lambton Worm—wish you could come. The walks around here are perfect—I would love to live in the place—its like Italy—even the *Café* is decent. But our landlady is the canniest which I think means the stingiest pusson going—Bacon and *one* egg—otherwise O.K. I'm awful tired—two drawings to-day.

Dear *Pen*—Nothing happens—weather beautiful. Ive finished all I shall do *here* outside—and shall get at the interiors next week—as fast as Mallows finishes them—to-morrow we are going over to Newcastle to look round. I think you may come up at the end of the week and bring some money with you too as I am near broke. Proofs havnt turned up yet—suppose they will arrive when they get here probably Monday—I am really played out to-night—two drawings a day for seven days—two theatres. We can work in the place during service which is delightful——The Wor-rum wasent near up to Faust [in the Penny Gaff]—dizzy blond tights—huge green caterpiller—swan fairy—old man demon—stuff stupid—God save the old Lady, etc., etc., etc—tableau.

Kamli—This letter is too late for to-night—but I was out so late scribbling and then I took a tramp and saw such a lovely thing I shall go at to-morrow—I think you may as well come *Saturday* and

if I am not done why it wont be very great punishment to stay a day or so here—for this is the most lovely city of distant views I have ever seen—so come Saturday *early* and if we can leave in the evening O.K., if not we will go on Sunday—Have you seen *The Pall Mall.*

In York our lodgings were in a dignified old house, the front door opening on Blake Street, the back windows—the recommendation to us—looking to the West End of the Minster. Most English Cathedrals are shut off from the town in an enclosure of their own. But York, in this respect more like the French Cathedrals, makes itself one with the town, not quite so familiarly, but with no walls and gates to mark a haughty line of separation. Its charm depends not on lawns and gardens and overshadowing trees, but on the architecture alone, and, when the days are not too cold, its beauty is at the service of the artist in winter as in summer. We spent the winter of 1886–1887 there, Pennell's father with us, and Mallows setting up perspectives and making his Pugin drawings, an article on York, for *Harper's* another reason for Pennell to stay on. The Cathedral dignitaries were as indifferent in York as in Lincoln—indifferent socially, that is. For the artist as artist they showed respect, the Dean going so far as to order the Minster lit that Pennell might study an evening effect. The people of the town, to make up for the ecclesiastical indifference, were excessive in their effort to save us from provincial dulness by teas, dinners, and literary evenings we could have dispensed with, doing their best, as I noted at the time, to keep up with the rapidity and unexpectedness of Pennell's arguments, seldom succeeding but struggling on manfully. Even our landlady sought

to befriend us, on Christmas Eve providing frumenty, the Yorkshire Christmas dish, with a little American flag on top. Amusements were not wanting. The annual Fair in the market place, lurid melodramas in the theatre, and much skating, for the winter was exceptionally cold. Pennell remembered years afterwards how he "paralyzed the natives with grapevines and Philadelphia twists and things."

"An Italian Pilgrimage" was published in November, to us welcome in the English edition, for Seeley took pride in the appearance of his books; a disappointment in the American, for if Roberts Brothers retained our original title "Two Pilgrims' Progress", the glaring cover of their invention made us long to suppress it. Ticknor brought out "Tuscan Cities" in America: "This book contains about the last of American wood-engraving and the first of process block", Pennell wrote in Devitt Welsh's copy. "Dick Turpin" appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, also articles on cycling affairs and Greek Gypsies, who were camping near York to the bewilderment of the natives, the foreign Romany at that time being seldom seen in the country. Pennell's Cathedral Series began in the *Century* with Canterbury. His Charterhouse drawings were in the *Magazine of Art*. The American chapter for Lord Bury's cycling book was coming in proof. The "Recollections of an Illustrator" was begun. Seeley was considering the book on "Pen Drawing" and a second on "The London Guilds." The *Century* was discussing the Holland canals, *Harper's* was urging us to go to Scotland. Some of these schemes fell through. The American chapter was dropped from *Cycling*, Lord Bury discovering at the

last moment that the sport in England was his subject—no place in so English a volume for the Yankee. The Guilds never got farther than the magazine, though some years passed before the book was definitely dropped. Great as was Pennell's achievement, it did not exhaust the ideas and suggestions for work of a mind never at rest.

By the end of January, 1887, we were back in London, at Number 36 Bedford Place. The house in Fisher's Lane, Germantown, was suddenly tenantless and Pennell's father was obliged to hurry home. Without him we were more independent and during our two months in London we packed our belongings and shook the Bloomsbury dust from off our feet. The packing, if strenuous, left leisure to see old friends and make new ones. This was the period when we began to be asked to Holman Hunt's Studio and Mrs. Holman Hunt's afternoons. I recall one of these occasions when Dr. Furnivall, immensely amused, came up to tell us that Arthur Hughes, the Pre-Raphaelite, had just been asking "who is that tall lean genius?" meaning Pennell. There was time too to illustrate the old Cheshire Cheese for *Harper's*, to look up Italian drawings or etchings for Henley, now editor of the *Art Magazine;* to send "Trafalgar Square", "The Griffin of Fleet Street", and "Chelsea", these three plates printed by Brooker, to the Sixth Annual Exhibition of the Society of Painter-Etchers, the last year Pennell exhibited with a society in whose president he had lost confidence. And—I wonder how—he crowded in articles for cycling papers and an animated correspondence with Poultney Bigelow, who was editing *Outing*, but succeeded later

by another American eager for Pennell's collaboration until it came to the financial arrangements. Interest too was spared for outside enterprises—the National Exhibition of Arts, started by Holman Hunt, Walter Crane and George Clausen, in opposition to the Royal Academy but doomed to be "the absurd failure" Gosse foretold from the beginning; and the Society of Artists which held its first meeting on March 3, 1887. Both had Pennell's sympathy for their ends and objects, his criticism for their methods.

On the Saône voyage he declared that never again would he be tempted from his *Century* and *Harper* work. He fell when, in February, Henry Norman proposed a journey down the Franco-German frontier. "A somebody named Schnaebele had got over one frontier or the other and been shot," is Pennell's version long afterwards. The Schnaebele incident, to-day forgotten, at the time revived war rumours and feeling ran high. The American Minister, giving Pennell his passport, warned him of the risk he was running. He went, all the same, he and Norman taking bicycles. "Though we hunted for that war all the way to Nancy and Metz, between lunch and dinner each day, and then over the Vosges to Strassbourg, we never found it, but we had a perfect time."

The journalist set forth in search of a war, the artist returned to the Cathedrals. We were in Wells by the end of April, the season of apple and cherry blossoms, and Somerset is full of orchards. The last Cathedral was apt to be for him the loveliest, but I doubt if he ever altered his opinion of Wells "as the most lovely of all the English Cathedrals." Many are finer architecturally,

more interesting historically. But up till the Eighties, no other English Cathedral had been less tampered with by the reformer, the vandal and the restorer. It retained the essential adjuncts of a Cathedral—cloisters, chapter house, Bishop's Palace with walls, moat and drawbridge. Our lodgings were in the Vicars' Close, long and narrow, on either side a row of two-story brick houses, rising from each a tall chimney, in front of each a tiny garden. A stranger could not pass unnoticed in so small a town as Wells, especially an artist, more especially an artist who drew with his left hand. In the Cathedral precincts and on the near hillsides that left hand was as much stared at as in Belgian and French *cafés*. Canons visited us, asked us to tea, to Sunday-evening supper, our choice of lodgings strengthening our credentials; the Bishop's family called, and I dined at the Palace, in the crypt, taken in to dinner on the arm of the Bishop in Episcopal apron and gaiters. I was the more embarrassed because I faced the ordeal unsupported. To draw the Palace, the moat, the drawbridge, the campion-covered walls, was one thing; to brave the solemnity of so correct a clerical function was quite another, and Pennell was conveniently ill at the last moment.

Wells is at its best in spring, the surrounding country a mass of blossoms, fragrant green hills from which to look down upon town and Cathedral, in all directions picturesque villages full of flowers. One *Century* article was not enough to do all this beauty justice. We undertook a second for the *Magazine of Art;* a third with Mallows on Croscombe, the Tudor village at the end of an easy walk through meadows and low-lying lanes; a

fourth on the ancient gabled inn standing in the market place, from whose windows William Penn once was concerned to speak the truth to the people of the town. Henry Harper, with his wife, was in Wells for a couple of days, heard from a bewildered verger of the left hand, the wonderful drawings made with it, the artist, his American origin, and the result was that the sketch of the inn and the text went to *Harper's Weekly*. And perhaps this chance meeting was the origin of the Harpers asking Pennell to work for them alone,—impossible, as he was pledged to the *Century*. In Wells we received the good news that Longmans would publish "Our Sentimental Journey" and in the Vicars' Close we signed the contract.

Reluctantly, at the beginning of July, we journeyed on to Gloucester. It is more of a city than Wells, but our lodgings in the Cathedral Green were so quiet, save for the chimes, they might have been in the heart of the country. His distraction there in the evening was correcting proofs of "Our Sentimental Journey", Longmans having begun to print, and writing "Pen Drawing." When he wrote, his method, then and for some years, was to dictate to me. His brain worked with astonishing rapidity. What he had to say must be said at once or the thought might go as quickly as it came. Try as hard as I might, I could not keep up with him. He should have had a stenographer, and he did in later years. But he was used to me and at first self-conscious in dictating to any one he did not know. I often wondered if he would do better were he to write himself. If some of the impulsiveness, the chief characteristic of his style, was lost, he might have gained in force and concentration. He would have had

time to round out carefully in words the thoughts that tumbled over each other with embarrassing swiftness. One of my difficulties was my desire to do the rounding out as I wrote and not leave it for him to do afterwards. It may be because he felt this that eventually he preferred to do the writing as well as the thinking. Anyway, for many years we worked together, he talking and I putting down the talk,—the manner in which several of his successful books were written.

The sole interruptions to the busy month at Gloucester were a hot July week-end visit from Fisher Unwin, whom we walked up and down hill to near villages only less picturesque than the villages of Somerset; and the Queen's Jubilee. In the evening we climbed with all the town to the hilltop where the Jubilee bonfire was set alight and where we watched the flames of light suddenly spring up from the hills within sight, one after another, part of a chain of bonfires throughout the English country—less spectacular but more impressive than the pageant in London.

Another big commission forced us to leave Gloucester for an outdoor journey through a land where it rains all the year round but a trifle less in summer. This was the Scotch series for *Harper's*. It added to the pleasure of our journeys by road to choose a distinguished guide who had amiably, if unintentionally, mapped out a route for us. For the Hebrides we chose Doctor Johnson, reversing his route so as to go first to the Highlands and Islands while some remnant of summer remained. One other difference: Doctor Johnson drove comfortably; we walked, fearing that the public might weary of our tricycle. It was a mistake. Walking tired us, the rate of

progress bored us. I groaned under a light knapsack packed with the bare necessities. To these Pennell added

sketchbooks, inks, water colours, pens, brushes. I would have felt sorry for him had I not felt sorrier for myself. It is to our credit that we persevered as long as we did, tramping resolutely round Loch Lomond, Loch Fyne, Loch Awe, Loch Etive, over the passes between, yielding to the temptation of a waiting coach but once and then for a short distance, rejoicing, however, when, on reaching the coast at Oban, our dependence upon boats in getting from one island to another as far north as Harris, did not brand us as slackers. We could not pacify our conscience so easily when we went by steamer through the Caledonian Canal, we could not pacify it at all when, on the east coast, we went by train to the towns where Doctor Johnson stopped. But by that time we had had more than enough of walking.

Pennell, no matter how weary, was never blind to the solemn picturesqueness of the Highlands, to the grandeur of the rugged hills under the low cloud-laden skies, the richness of colour, the infinite variety in the play of light and shadow throughout this storm-driven land. He was impressed by the wide distances in Skye and Mull and Harris, by their sad silent villages, and sad despondent

crofters, by their little harbours, no less than by the great churches and busy fishing towns on the east coast. Crossing the high moorlands of Mull, he would sit by the dripping roadside if the sun, striving to break through the mist, would reveal unsuspected vistas beyond. He would brave the herring-steeped atmosphere of Fraserburgh to watch the herring fleet come in. No fatigue, no discouragement, no discomfort was allowed to interrupt work. The journey was wearisome but fruitful and the results were published in three articles in *Harper's Monthly* (1888) and the next year in book form by Harper Brothers in America, T. Fisher Unwin in England.

CHAPTER XV

LIFE IN WESTMINSTER · ART CRITICISM · PEN DRAWING · SUMMER ON THE THAMES AND IN PROVENCE (1887–1888)

To the west of Westminster Abbey, between the river and the old Westminster slums, is a little quarter of London which, in the Eighties, was almost unknown, wholly neglected, all but untouched since the eighteenth century. Some one sent us there in search of lodgings. It was next door to the Abbey where Pennell's chief work was now to be done, it had the venerable look of the Cathedral towns in which we had been living, it was as quiet and seemed as remote as the Vicars' Close at Wells or the Cathedral Green at Gloucester. In Great College and Barton Streets, a step from Dean's Yard and Westminster School, some of the masters lived. In the streets beyond were chiefly little dressmakers, little clerks, little artisans. North Street was to us the most pleasing—a short block of small brick houses, at one end an ancient grey stone church, probably the ugliest in London, with a legend which we thought amusing. It was built for Queen Anne. When the architect submitted his first designs, according to the story, she rejected them in a temper, kicked over her footstool, pointed to it with its four squat legs lifted in the air: "There, go build me a church like that if you can do no better." He took

her at her word, and the square awkward church still shuts in the street at the upper end. Number 16 had some pretentions. It was a double house; Mrs. Dunbar, the landlady, was a neat Scotch woman; the tiny rooms were immaculately clean and well furnished, their walls panelled, their windows with deep window seats. We took three rooms and moved in the same morning. English friends said that we could have hunted the town over and nowhere else hit upon such a perfect bit of old London. American relations who discovered us there were shocked, politely hoped we had no intention of staying. But we did stay, for a year and a half.

Pennell afterwards felt partly responsible for the ruin of that unspoiled bit of London's past. Through his friends—publishers, editors, artists, authors, journalists—others heard of it. We began to have literary neighbours: Ernest Rhys and his sister, Mrs. Gertrude Atherton in North Street; Charles Whibley in Fig Tree House, Millbank Street facing the river, where he was succeeded by Frank Podmore, indefatigable member of the Psychical Society; Henley brought the offices of the *National Observer* to Great College Street. Women of title followed and, worse, rich Members of Parliament, indifferent to the picturesqueness and dignity of age, who pulled down the little old brick houses and put up staring new mansions. The last time I wandered back to the quarter for memory's sake, I hardly knew it.

Pennell would have been better satisfied had there been a wider outlook from the windows, a beautiful outlook for him becoming more and more desirable, indispensable really. But any arrangement made just then could only be temporary. He had as yet no thought of settling

ST. JOHN'S FROM NORTH STREET, WESTMINSTER

Etching by Joseph Pennell

in London. He was there because of the Abbey just as he had been in the Cathedral towns because of the Cathedrals. We were uncertain as to our movements. His father had been again ill in Philadelphia and we had been on the point of going to him. Now he was on the point of coming to us. Besides, if the scheme for a French Cathedral series of twelve articles materialized, it would mean several summers in French Cathedral towns. No definite plan was possible save the one plan of finishing the Abbey drawings, and Guild drawings that were to have developed into a book, but never developed into anything save one article, numerous dinners and large boxes of chocolate distributed to wives left at home. There were also drawings for a paper on London by Henry James. As always, work directed our movements.

He was hardly in his new quarters before Fisher Unwin put him up as Honorary Member of the National Liberal Club, and proposed him for membership in the Johnson Club. The Johnson Club brought an occasional diversion—a dinner at the Cock or the Cheshire Cheese or other supposed-to-be-Johnson haunts, not as yet overrun by American tourists, the evening ending with speeches or papers about the Great Man. The National Liberal Club proved a constant distraction. His only English clubs so far were cycling clubs, the men he met in them, with few exceptions, interested in nothing save cycling, with talk of little else. The object of the National Liberal Club was, of course, politics, but he fell in at once with a younger group of varied interests who took possession of a small room they called the Vestry and met there in the evening. One or more were

always sure to be on hand when Pennell was in the humour for talk and discussion: T. Fisher Unwin, Henry Norman, H. W. Massingham, then of the Associated Press, presently to be identified with the *Star*. Others were J. G. Legge in the Home Office, son of Doctor Legge, the Chinese scholar and Professor of Chinese at Oxford; Robert Chalmers, also in a government office, he and Legge both rising to influential posts in later years, Chalmers capturing titles on the way,—Lord Chalmers, Governor of Ceylon, now Master at Peterhouse College, Cambridge; Paul Villars, London correspondent of the *Journal des Débats;* Frederick Green, a clergyman, mostly concerned with Peace societies and the Johnson Club; Harold Rogers, Herbert Gladstone—a promising group, scarcely one of whom betrayed his promise. They were all young enough to retain their keen interest in everything going on about them. And a good deal was going on to make gossip in a club which called itself Liberal and National.

Socialism, though not the Morris brand, was lifting up its head. Labour was revolting. The unemployed were asserting themselves and, in 1887–1888, disputing with the authorities for the possession of Trafalgar Square. The Club was within a six or seven minutes' walk of North Street, the Vestry was stimulating after a busy day, and the old Club quarters had the advantage of overlooking the scene of disorder on Sundays when the unemployed clashed with the mounted police and special commissioners, with the Guards when things got desperate. The excitement was intense, culminating in the famous Sunday Stead called Bloody Sunday, making much newspaper capital of it. Pennell was in-

terested, in the thick of it all, wandering with Villars to gather facts and incidents for next morning's *Débats*, seeing the Guards called out, listening to loud singing of the Marseillaise, on hand when John Burns and Cunninghame Graham got arrested and Mrs. Annie Besant did her best to be taken up with them. In the course of the few years in Westminster he came in also for inside information about the Parnell Commission and the Pigott melodrama. He attended dinners given to Henry George. He was on friendliest terms with members of the new County Council, so much so that once at a County Councillor's party, a worshipping young woman asked him eagerly, "And are you a County Councillor?"

"Bless you, no," was his answer, to her bewilderment, "I'm a Yankee."

His interest was simply that of the intelligent observer,—the same interest that attracted him to Frederick Harrison's Positivist meetings, Walter Besant's People's Palace, which he promptly illustrated for *The Century*, Toynbee Hall. He was not a Liberal in the Gladstone sense. He was not a Socialist in the William Morris sense, or Stead's, or Hyndman's, or Stewart Headlam's. His sympathy went out instinctively to the under dog. Only with years of observation and experience, much reading and more thought, did he begin to understand that most men are born under dogs, that an aristocracy is inevitable—but an aristocracy of brains, of genius, combined with energy and hard work.

An unexpected outcome of the meetings in the Vestry was his plunge into art criticism. The *Star* was started about this time, Colman, the mustard man, backing it.

An afternoon halfpenny paper for the people hitherto uncatered for was the idea. T. P. O'Connor and Massingham, the editors, achieved success by providing such a halfpenny's worth as never had been heard of. Their scheme was not to give the people what the people wanted, in the fashion of our purveyors of comics, photographs and crime, but what they ought to want, the most novel feature for that period being signed columns on music, the drama, literature and art, one published every day. All honour is due to them for their daring, though it must be admitted that the foundation of their success was Captain Coe's "Finals." Captain Coe was their sports editor and the fact that his "Finals" could be had for a halfpenny went straight to the great heart of the people, with whom sport was the one thing that counted. Bernard Shaw at first wrote the art column; Clement K. Shorter, an old friend of Massingham's, the literary column at one time, Richard Le Gallienne at another; A. B. Walkley, later promoted to the *Times*, the dramatic column. I remember Bernard Shaw's telling me, when the paper was a few months' old, of his disgust with Pennell for wasting his time concocting cycling notes for the *Pall Mall*. The *Star* ought to get him to write on art. It was a shame that the rare artist with ideas of his own should not have the chance to express them. The truth was that Shaw was tiring of his art column, and giving it up for the column on music which he signed *Corno di Bassetto*. Probably he talked to Massingham in the same fashion. Certainly, within a few weeks Pennell was the accredited art critic of Massingham's paper.

Pennell went into the work as he went into every-

thing, heart and soul, determined to do his best and to make that best tell. "New" was the popular slang word of the period—the new journalism, the new woman, the new theatre, and of some new substitute for the old criticism British art was sorely in need. To all appearances the Royal Academy was as impregnable a bulwark of British art as the Bank of England was of British finance, the Established Church of British religion. It was approved by royalty and society. The summer exhibition was one of the chief events of the season, the annual dinner an opportunity for statesmen to announce their coming policy. Show Sunday, that curious, outmoded fashion, the Private View and the *Soirée* were social functions that lent distinction to the invited guests. Qualifications for admission to the Academy were few, if rigid. The artist who could turn out the big painted anecdote, who could play a decent game of billiards, who was an all-round good fellow was sure of election. If elected, rewards were amazing. Ready sales and high prices were guaranteed. Academicians built themselves palaces in Kensington and St. John's Wood and lived like princes. Before their work in the Academy the crowd gathered, eager patrons disputed for its possession, squandering one thousand, two thousand, three thousand guineas upon paintings which could not be sold for as many hundreds to-day. No wonder that to criticize the Academician was, in the Academician's opinion, sheer presumption.

And yet, to those with eyes to see, it was plain that the revolt had begun. One sign was the respect of certain groups of the younger men for Whistler. Another was the defiance of the ancient, highly respectable

Society of British Artists in accepting him as member, though, having gone further and elected him president, they repented and promptly got rid of him. The brand-new New English Art Club and the newer Glasgow School were faithful disciples in the beginning, when, in Zola's phrase, they set out to conquer London. A few dealers were not afraid to flaunt the abomination of French Impressionism under the shadow of Burlington House; a few Englishmen had the temerity to exhibit as London Impressionists. The revolt spread to patrons of art and a sign of unrest was in the art organizations that kept cropping up, some to live, some to disappear in a day. An Association for the Advancement of Art announced a new Renaissance but never got farther than a meeting at Grosvenor House, with the Duke of Westminster in the Chair and among the speakers the fiery Rathbone from Liverpool, very much on the war path; Edmund Gosse, quoting figures collected at the Board of Trade; Oscar Wilde, denouncing him for it so that Gosse, whose sense of humour never failed, described himself as the Philistine among the Aesthetes. The New Gallery opened, the spirit of restlessness in its name, but the Academic influence too strong for it. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was founded, apparently to uphold William Morris in his abhorrence of modern schools and conventions. Signs were not wanting that British Academic art was being jolted and threatened out of its old rut of complacency. "I smell the powder!" Félix Buhot, his eyes aflame, said to me at a New English "Private View", and indeed, powder was in the air for those whose scent was keen.

Younger art critics, with the daring to think for

themselves, began to be heard from. R.A.M.—"Bob"—Stevenson, trained as an artist, was art critic for the *Saturday Review* but abandoned it for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Charles Whibley, always volcanic, learning much from Stevenson, was writing for the *Scots Observer*. Joseph Pennell on the *Star* was a third—a powerful third. And before long D. S. MacColl, fresh from Oxford, was to be the fourth, with the *Spectator* for his pulpit.

In art criticism, as in all other matters, that "weighty obligation" which was Pennell's Quaker inheritance forced him to speak the truth without fear or hesitation. So far, his journalism had been confined chiefly to cycling. As a cyclist he had spoken the truth and, in consequence, made enemies. Now he spoke the truth on what to him was the most serious thing in life and, in speaking it, he was trespassing on Academic preserves, regardless of the warning to keep off at the risk of Academic displeasure. To defy the Academy was to be cast into outer darkness, a rank outsider. Because of his art criticism he gradually became unpopular with the public and artists alike, unpopularity being the portion of the honest and the outspoken. The public did not want to be disturbed in its easy Academic faith. Artists given to sentiment said that to criticize one's fellow artists "was not done".

Pennell did not mind. There were things he was determined to say because he felt they ought to be said. Moreover, in a halfpenny paper he was saying them to the people, and he had a great idea of "bringing art to the people" as a matter of course, not with the condescension of the young University missionary. It was

impossible for him to compromise. He faced the consequences, though he did not relish unpopularity, and he could boast that whatever price he paid personally his criticisms never got the *Star* into trouble. At times the editors grew nervous and used the editorial blue pencil. When he took Massingham to task for tampering with his articles—in fairness to Massingham it should be said he seldom did—the excuse was that the *Star* already had several lawsuits on its hands to which it could not afford to add two or three more. Once Marie Bashkirtseff's relations, wrathful I do not recall over what, made the Law Courts seem an imminent probability, but their wrath went no farther than threats. Once Walter Crane lost his temper, thinking qualified praise of the first Exhibition of the Arts and Crafts an insult, and in a newspaper letter waved a big stick at Pennell. But his temper, after blazing for a day, burned itself out, and the two men, really in sympathy, were on the best of terms until Crane's death. Some friends, it is true, dropped away, but friends of that kind were not worth keeping. Enemies multiplied but their enmity was a compliment.

The objection of a few who knew him well enough to make it was that his work as critic must interfere with his work as artist. On the contrary, as he never could be idle, never sit with hands folded, it was well for him to find complete change of occupation in writing. To the larger shows he would have gone in any case, through interest. The smaller shows monopolized little time. Notes for the weekly column came of themselves. On the days of important exhibitions I arranged to be at home to play the amanuensis. Massingham, the most

sympathetic, the most clear-sighted of editors, agreed that I was to act also as understudy, to do the work when Pennell could not or when *Century* commissions kept him away from London for weeks or months at a time. One result was that I could accompany him only on short journeys or in the summer, when art was out of season. But in this sort of journalism I found a charm and it was a pleasant source of income.

How little of a brake criticism was upon his drawing can be judged by the number and distinction of his illustrations during the years 1887–1888 and 1888–1889. He completed the Westminster Abbey drawings, large important architectural studies. Also a series in London, "From Charing Cross to St. Paul's", for Seeley, whose admiration never waned though, unfortunately, his scale of payment did not keep pace with it, and artists cannot live on publishers' praise alone. Justin McCarthy wrote the text. These are the drawings which W. A. Rogers, in his "World Worth While", says he saw taken out of a fireproof safe more than thirty years afterwards by a Philadelphia dealer, and "treated with all the respect that might have been paid to a portfolio full of government bonds." They are to-day in Mr. A. Edward Newton's collection, a valuable record, not simply of Pennell's pen-and-ink work but of the Strand of the last century, since destroyed by modern progress, that most insatiable of vandals. Henry James' article, published in the *Century* for December, 1888, produced more illustrations of London and inspired Pennell to get out his copper plates, waiting to print most of them until he had his own press in the early Nineties. James, lavish in praise, went so far as to declare in a letter that

if his writing ever could be what he sometimes dreamed it was, he would give it up to be able to draw like Pennell—never had he worked with so responsive an artist. And the praise made Pennell so shy that, if he caught a glimpse of James in the street or in a publisher's office, he would run as if for his life, only getting over his fright on better acquaintance when James came to see us in Barton Street and the Adelphi. The cycling notes, disapproved of by Bernard Shaw, did not entirely stop. For the *Pall Mall* and the *Graphic* Pennell continued to play "our special representative" at the military manoeuvres of the Cycling Corps. It was his recreation. The *Century* called for a visit to Uppingham and its School, another to Cambridge and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Gosse who wrote the article, having waited overlong. Published books were a pleasant diversion. In the autumn of 1887 it was "A Summer Voyage on the River Saône", and, in the early winter of 1888, "Our Sentimental Journey", these two books containing some of Pennell's most characteristic and delicate pen drawings. Other books that year were "Christopher Plantin and the Plantin Museum", the *Century* article with his illustrations, published by the Grolier Club, and Doctor Martin's "Old Chelsea", brought out by the *Century* in America, Fisher Unwin in England.

His chief literary preoccupation was his "Pen Drawing." He thought he had finished it in Gloucester, but every day taught him more of his subject, and he tore up old chapters and wrote new ones in their place. Seeley was bent upon issuing the book but afraid of it, uncertain how far and into what expense Pennell's enthusiasm would carry him. Now he would, and now he

wouldn't, like a timid woman. No sooner had Pennell settled with artists and engravers and process men than Seeley's fright got the better of him and nobody concerned in the making of the book knew exactly where he or anybody else was. By Christmas (1887) Seeley reached the reckless stage, plunging ahead regardless. Pennell, encouraged, ran over to Paris to see about examples of Vierge and the Spaniards who had been his masters. I went with him and Fisher Unwin joined us. We all three worked hard during the day but in the evening we met at Lapérouse, which we had just discovered and which Pennell loved, dining being one of the arts the artist he was delighted in. The excitement of the week culminated in the little bookshop of Bonhoure, publisher of the French illustrated edition of *Pablo de Ségovie*. We supposed that Vierge, paralysed during the Paris Commune, was dead. At Bonhoure's we learned that he was not only living but drawing again, though with his left hand. The three of us hurried to call on him. He himself opened his front door, the picture of health, big, handsome, but "Oh! la! la!" his sole contribution to the conversation. He had not recovered his speech. His wife interpreted. He agreed to everything Pennell asked and, before we left, Fisher Unwin was arranging for an English edition of *Pablo* and a London exhibition of the drawings and Pennell and I, in our enthusiasm, wrote an article on Vierge for the November *Portfolio*, 1888. We called on Casanova who, though he had practically ceased to illustrate, made a drawing especially for the book. Rico was not in Paris, but Pennell got his Venice address from Madame Rico. Like Casanova, he made a drawing, proud to be repre-

sented by an American artist for whom, he said, his admiration was profound. Few things ever gave Pennell greater satisfaction than this week in Paris. He could not forget the debt he owed to the Spaniards, upon whose style his own was originally based, and to find them not merely willing but eager to work with and for him redoubled his interest in "Pen Drawing."

But Seeley's interest was slackening again. All winter he shilly-shallied. Because of his friendship for Pennell he refused to say he would not, because of his ill health he hesitated to say he would. Photo-engravers grew impatient. Emery Walker was torn between his determination to do nothing for Seeley and his desire to do everything for Pennell. The crisis came in June, 1888. Seeley, not yet refusing definitely, said it would be easy to find another publisher for such a book. "Then find him," was Pennell's ultimatum. And Seeley found the Macmillans and nothing could have been more satisfactory. This was the beginning of a long and close relationship with the firm, and friendship with Mr. (now Sir) Frederick Macmillan. He was no less an enthusiast than Pennell and the book was under his personal supervision. He decided that to ensure its success —and a profit—it must be brought out on an elaborate scale at a large price. Pennell was not unwilling. Sure now of his publishers' active sympathy, his interest redoubled. If he wanted to reproduce drawings that had to be paid for and the publishers hesitated, he paid for them himself. He appealed to the *Century* and the editors presented him with examples of Blum, Brennan, Farney, Lungren, Birch. He looked up the Dalziels, was able to get original drawings of the "Men of the Sixties"—

"The Golden Age of Illustration" his name for that decade, a name that stuck. He called on Charles Keene, the one *Punch* man who kept up the standard, he said. Keene grunted, but brought out his Menzels and Chodowieckis and feared that Menzel, if approached, would prove the avaricious old man of his reputation and ask a fabulous sum for an original drawing. And Pennell went to hear W. J. Linton lecture, hoping for stray hints but hearing nothing save fierce abuse of American wood engraving. Linton, chained to the past, could only look backward and lament the evils of the present. It was extraordinary what an offense American wood engraving was to engravers of the old school who thought their line counted for more than the artist's. They had no use for American wood engravers who believed their business was to interpret.

Our outdoor work together in the summer of 1888 was on the Upper Thames, an enchanting "Stream of Pleasure" as different as possible from the Lower Thames, Henley's "Old Father-River." Neither of us could swim, neither of us could row or scull, so we hired a boat without fear, and without seeing it, from the famous Oxford boat-builder, Salter. We trained to Oxford and pulled or were carried down by the stream to Richmond, giving a month to the journey, stopping a night—two nights—three nights—in the picturesque old inns of the picturesque old villages on the river banks, sharing the boat at week-ends sometimes with Fisher Unwin, sometimes with Legge, sometimes with Green, sometimes with all three. We never took what is called a holiday; work always went along. But if life has anything pleasanter to give than this combination

of work and play on the upper reaches of the Thames, I have yet to find it.

Pennell was hardly back in London at the end of August before he was off to Provence. Miss Preston had been there in the spring, had written her articles, the editors were impatient for the illustrations. At the same time he could learn something of the Cathedrals and churches of Southern France as a preparation for the bigger commission looming up in the immediate future. This was the first time he stayed, except overnight, in French provincial towns, the first time he studied French architecture. French life appealed to him, French architecture impressed him. He loved the little English Cathedral towns, but there were drawbacks. Bacon and eggs for breakfast, the English chop for dinner palled with daily repetition. When rain interfered with walks in the long English twilight, the English town supplied no resources. In the French inn a good breakfast at noon and a good dinner in the evening offered endless variety, and when hours had to be idled away because of fatigue or weather, always at the *café*, that civilized institution, a table waited, a glass of coffee to linger over, and papers to read. The life was agreeable, the work was engrossing, the people were sympathetic. Even the diligence with which the police arrested him was amusing. All the same, he thought it wise to appeal to M. Jusserand, at the French Embassy in London, who supplied him with credentials, and so did the Mayor of Avignon before whom he was brought for drawing the old broken bridge, across which for centuries all the world had not been able to pass. He returned to North Street in fine form and with the spoils of travel: an

amazing grey linen shooting jacket, pockets to its every square inch; a familiar French blue cloak; a red woolen scarf of the variety the Provençal workman winds round and round his waist; a blue béret; a hat of disreputable curves and angles; and a basket full of peaches. Also a Provençal *pannière* bought for a song, Provençal furniture not having then been discovered by Madison Avenue antiquity shops; a little Provençal salt-and-pepper box; a huge Provençal buffet, so huge that all three had to be sent straight to storage or, in Mrs. Dunbar's rooms, no space would have remained for us.

Excitement awaited him. "Our Journey to the Hebrides," a series of three articles, was appearing in *Harper's*. William Black, at the height of his popularity, had an idea that the Scotch Highlands and Islands were his for all literary and artistic purposes. His "Macleod of Dare" was one of the best sellers of the Eighties. We had strayed, unbidden, into his preserves, we had had the impudence to speak of him lightly and of the Hebrides with truth. His indignation found vent in long letters to the *Athenaeum*. We answered. The *Athenaeum* was timid. Black was the great man of the moment, we were Americans. It refused to publish our letters, then did publish them, sadly butchered. Other people took up the cudgels for us. Deputations from the Vestry came to North Street, headed by Fisher Unwin and Massingham, to condole, to encourage, to advise. The war of words was bitter on one side, gay on the other. Pennell rather enjoyed it, the more because the Harpers were not frightened. They arranged to publish the articles as a book in America, and Fisher Unwin agreed to take over an English edition. Unpopular authors envied us;

nothing sold a book like abuse, they said. Pennell seldom limited himself to the number of drawings commissioned. For those *Harper's* could not use, fine impressions of Loch Fyne, Loch Tarbet, the East Coast, the *Portfolio* found space in 1890.

Towards the end of the winter we were forced to search for new lodgings. His father was well enough to return to us in the spring. Two crowded Mrs. Dunbar's rooms; with a third they would be impossible. We hunted, sometimes together, sometimes each alone, from Hammersmith to Chiswick, from Gray's Inn to Clement's, from Temple chambers to Victoria Street flats. Quarters that suited us were beyond our means, quarters within our means we would not have lived in at any price. We were all but despairing when, as often happens, what we wanted turned up just round the corner. At the beginning of May we moved to Number 6 Barton Street.

CHAPTER XVI

LIFE IN BARTON STREET · "PEN DRAWING" IS PUBLISHED · THE FRENCH CATHEDRALS ARE BEGUN
(1889–1890)

Number 6 Barton Street, until shortly before we took possession, was a public house, The Salutation, said to date back to gabled and timbered days, when it was the headquarters of pilgrims to the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The brand-new County Council, with its brand-new broom, was beginning to sweep away, among other things, as many public houses within its jurisdiction as it could and The Salutation, whose license fell in at this psychological moment, was among the first to go. The publican was transformed into a lodging-house keeper, with a house that had for us three advantages. The rooms were larger than Mrs. Dunbar's; we could rent all that were to let; and a new, downstairs, one-story billiard room with a top light could be used as a studio. The furniture was an offence, but we bought a bookcase and desk in Wardour Street, an easel at Newman's, copies of Hampton Court chairs, a rug and curtains at Liberty's. We took out of storage the brasses and brocades we had bought in Venice and Antwerp, also the Provençal trophies that made a fine showing in the panelled rooms. The place looked comfortable and homelike.

Without waiting a day to enjoy it, we were off to Paris and the Universal Exposition for the *Star*, cycling down from Dieppe, the first to make a serious trial of the recently invented tandem bicycle on the road. We made a sensation all the way, but nowhere greater than along the Champs-Elysées and the Rue de Rivoli, at the hour when all Paris takes the air. Immediately afterwards Pennell was crossing the Irish Channel to meet a party of American cyclists landing at Queenstown, leaving them to join me in Antwerp, where his father was to arrive on a Red Star boat, hurrying back at once to the American cyclists who had in the meanwhile got to France. He could accomplish more, with never a spare minute to be tired in, than any man I ever knew.

Our outdoor article this summer was on Switzerland, in the Matterhorn and Zermatt region, not yet tourist-ridden. "There is plenty of time for the French Cathedrals," Gilder wrote, "go and play about in the Alps"; not a bad place to play about in we found. The average traveller fought shy of the walk or donkey ride first from Viège to St. Nicholas, then from Zermatt up to the Riffelalp. The Zermatt hotels were precisely as Daudet described them, and the wonder was not to face his Tartarin across the prunes and rice of the long *table d'hôte*. Fisher Unwin turned up our second week there, with him Robert Spence, a London solicitor. The three men, accompanied by guides, carrying ropes, ice axes, and all the approved paraphernalia, climbed one of the most difficult "Horns", while I, looking down the valley from the windows of our room in the high Riffelalp Hotel, did not envy them. What Pennell got out of subjects so wholly new to him can be seen in the

COWLEY STREET LEADING INTO BARTON STREET, WITH OUR LODGINGS AT THE RIGHT HAND CORNER OF THE TWO STREETS

Etching by Joseph Pennell

Century article, "Play and Work in the Alps", June, 1891, an article never republished.

If at last Pennell had the pretence of a studio in London, work to do in it was not lacking. *Harper's* alone would have kept him busy with illustrations: in Oxford for an article by Ethel Arnold, in Edinburgh for an article on its landmarks by Lawrence Hutton, and, more to the illustrator's taste, for an article on the London Music Halls by Anstey. Those were the days of the serio-comic, of Bessie Bellwood, Marie Lloyd and Ada Lundberg, Little Tich, Chevalier, Dan Leno and "the one-eyed Kaffir." Cinquevalli and Martinelli were in their prime, the Alhambra Ballet drew the town night after night, the Music-Hall "Sketch" was at the height of its popularity. Pennell thought Anstey's "Angel Child", a parody of the "Sketch", a masterpiece, and was glad to work with him, especially as the Music Hall was rich in the character the theatre had lost. From the Alhambra to the Hoxton, from the Empire to the Met, from the Pavillion to the Canterbury, author and illustrator visited them all, William Archer sometimes of the company, and the three getting no end of fun out of it, Archer so inspired as to suggest a series on the German theatres with Pennell, one of the countless schemes that never came off. In the West End the three passed unnoticed, nothing to distinguish them from their neighbours. But in the East End and South London their presence was a sensation, above all at Hoxton where, for a shilling, they had a box to themselves. That new broom of the County Council was as busy in the "Halls" as in the "pubs." The chief sweeper-up of vice was a County Councillor named McDougall,

seconded diligently by Mrs. Ormiston Chant—who remembers her?—a valiant crusader against wine, woman and song. When Pennell, Anstey and Archer, unmistakably strangers in these parts, sat in their Hoxton box, a murmur went through the house right up on to the stage: "McDougall!" and their appearance was the most successful turn of the evening. The drawings for the article, unlike those for "Faust", did get published, historic documents that can be consulted in *Harper's Magazine* for January, 1891.

Pennell's reputation as a man of ideas and energy grew as rapidly in London as a few years before in Philadelphia and, as in Philadelphia, he was in demand for new enterprises, elected to societies, put on committees. That winter of 1889–1890 Francis Bate, Secretary of the New English Art Club, and Arthur Tomson, a member, were launching a paper, the *Art Weekly*, and both came to him as often for advice as for articles. About the same time *Black-and-White*, an illustrated weekly long since dead and forgotten, was started and he was appealed to for a drawing to appear in the first number. Cyclists about to establish a club house in London asked him to serve on the committee, and late afternoon and evening meetings were frequent. He was on the council of the Cyclists' Touring Club, and their meetings took him now to Liverpool, now to Coventry, often to more remote towns, for the Club's policy was to identify itself with all sections of the country. Every other Friday evening was reserved for the Art Workers' Guild—Crane's Guild—of which Pennell approved, its object being talk about art by artists, the only people he thought could talk about art with authority. The John-

son Club monopolized one evening a month. To the dinners of the New English Art Club at the opening of their exhibitions he was invited, as well as to the dinners of the *Scots Observer*, where he often sat next to Whistler, with whom he began to feel more at ease, losing gradually his first discomfort in "the master's" presence. At home he spent few evenings alone. The Barton Street sitting room became a pleasant dropping-in place for friends and, as always, if his habit of speaking the truth kept the many away, it drew to him the few who understood and appreciated: Fisher Unwin, Legge, Norman, Charles Whibley, Bernard Shaw, Harold Cox, the Arthur Tomsons were some of the most constant evening visitors. And in the afternoon, at the hour of tea, the Edmund Gosses, Henry James, Austin Dobson, the Henry Harlands, the William Sharps, Doctor Furnivall, Charles Godfrey Leland were often with us.

In November (1889) the publication of "Our Journey to the Hebrides" in London and New York made things lively. The Macleod of Macleod threatened a libel suit: perhaps the fine advertisement friends thought but a waste of time, and we were relieved when he learned, on investigation, that I had consulted Blue Books and used my eyes too carefully for him to have the shadow of a reason to sue us. English critics, generally, were of the opinion that Americans had no business to see the Hebrides as they were—how they are to-day I cannot say. The drawings might be approved, but not the text. Some reviews dismissed us as "peevish and silly." The *Pall Mall Gazette's* headline was "Tourists in a Temper", and Leslie, on the editorial staff, told us that

the paper had never published so nasty a notice. To the *English Churchman* I was "an evidently vulgar American"—we began to think our nationality was our crime. In the last century the Englishman's attitude to the American was one of tolerance and he was pained if the American failed to be grateful. Some agreeable things were said. Highlanders who were not landlords wrote to thank us. Professor Blackie admitted that we were right about the crofters, if wrong about the weather. But even a friend like Gosse told us frankly he thought the book a mistake.

We forgot the Hebrides when, a fortnight later, "Pen Drawing and Pen Draughtsmen" was published. It might almost be called a Profession of Faith. If to Pennell all art was illustration, his interest was keenest in that expression of it which gave the book its title. To the William Morris group the unpardonable sin of American illustration was that it ignored the text with which the drawings were printed, had no respect for the printed page. The American publishers and editors who, for the sake of variety, asked for wash drawings, and the American illustrators who supplied them, were referred to the early printed books: where, in these masterpieces, was a wash drawing to be found? Pennell answered that, had it not been for the experiments of printers and artists, illustration would never have got farther than the ever-quoted St. Christopher block. Botticelli was looking not backward, but forward, when he illustrated the "Hypnerotomachia"—if he did illustrate it. He was essentially an innovator; so was Dürer. Probably had the illustrators Kelmscott looked up to as masters known anything about wash,

had their engravers been able to reproduce it and their printers to print it, they too would have used wash, for they were no less adventurers in illustration than the makers of the American magazines. One evening, during a discussion after an Arts and Crafts meeting, Pennell was arguing in this fashion when William Morris lost his temper. "And what do you know or understand about the Kelmscott printing?" he asked. "Enough to have bought the Kelmscott *Chaucer*," Pennell said, and that ended the argument. Pennell, never restricted by formula, sometimes used pencil, which had little charm for his editors, who feared the public might see in a pencil drawing merely a hasty sketch. But on the whole, pen-and-ink was a more congenial medium than either pencil or wash. He never ceased to delight in the eloquence, the quality of line the pen gave him.

His preference was for the etched line until he was discouraged by Goulding's patronage and the Royal Painter-Etchers' indifference. Despite the Barton Street studio, the future was too undecided for him to invest in a printing press. Now and then, when the impulse to etch was irresistible, he would get out his copper plates, ground them, draw on them, bite them, but where was he to print them? Repeated disappointment threw him back with redoubled devotion to his pen. He was more reconciled to it because of the continual development of the mechanical processes of reproduction. Process was apt to make a mess of wash drawings, but photogravure reproduced line with a fidelity impossible to the wood engraver. The plates of Amand-Duran and Dujardin, artists in all they did, were such exact facsimiles of old prints that, even though signed,

museum authorities were known to mistake them for originals. French photo-engravers drifted across the Channel to London, among them Louis Chefdeville, who reproduced the drawings for the Saône book. He had studied art in the Paris schools but the Franco-German War, in which he was forced to serve as soldier, left him penniless and to make a living he turned his skill as artist to the craft of photo-engraving. No better work of the kind than his was ever done. Pennell, profiting by the development of photographic methods of reproduction, tried to believe that from pen drawing reproduced by photogravure he could obtain precisely what he wanted from etching. He went so far as to decide that hereafter his line work would be done in this way. Never, however, would he have confused the art of etching with the mechanical craft of photo-engraving or called the results of both by the same name. Truth, and nothing but the truth, must be upheld in art, as in science or law or religion, and he soon faced the opportunity of saying so in a manner that could leave no doubt as to his meaning.

To the thinking public the book was a revelation. Few before thought of pen drawing as an art apart; few could deny its claim when confronted with so fine a series of examples. And the text emphasized the fact that it is a modern art. The Old Masters, if they used the pen, used it for the jotting down of notes and memoranda. The modern masters used it to produce finished works of art, thanks to the modern methods of reproduction. Pennell made this clear, pointed out how photo-engraving led to a greater command of line; had the temerity to compare the line of the artist of

yesterday with the line of the artist of to-day, often to the latter's advantage; collected examples from France, Spain, Italy, Germany, America, by men the Briton, secure on his Island, had never heard of. In his pages Menzel towered; Rico, Vierge and Casanova, Abbey, Blum and Brennan were his heroes. Among English artists Charles Keene scored it over Academicians. It was a challenge—it was revolutionary, a book to be applauded, to be condemned, attracting enough attention for fine and ordinary editions to be speedily exhausted. That artists like Abbey and Parsons liked it well enough to buy it was to Pennell a satisfaction. To the indiscriminate praise or blame of the average critic he paid little attention, though naturally he was irritated when the *Saturday Review*, in a few words, included "Pen Drawing" among "Some Illustrated Books," and pleased when the *Scots Observer* reviewed it at length intelligently, pointing out faults as well as merits. But it was only when Hamerton advocated the claims of photogravure to the name of etching that he was goaded into discussion with his critic. Hamerton took this unexpected course in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Pennell protested in the same paper. Hamerton repeated his arguments in the *Portfolio;* Pennell said what he had to say in the *Magazine of Art*. How right he was to denounce the confusion of terms upheld by Hamerton was soon to be shown.

By chance, shortly after the publication of "Pen Drawing", Pennell went down to Bushey to see Hubert Herkomer who, having read the book, talked much of it, said that hereafter he would use a pen instead of a needle, and brought out proofs of Annan and Swan's

photogravures of his drawings to illustrate his play, "An Idyll", shortly to be published. Pennell thought no more about it until the following spring, when the illustrations for "An Idyll" were advertised as etchings. Herkomer was a Royal Academician, a member of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, a Slade professor, and because of his position, his influence was great. Frank Short and Seymour Haden shared Pennell's objections when he called their attention to the matter. Such a confusion of terms could not be countenanced, Haden vowed, and asked Pennell to his house and the Athenaeum to discuss the incident. He suggested that the Society of Royal Painter-Etchers should in writing present the case to the Royal Academy. He saw its president, Sir Frederick Leighton. What Leighton said was not disclosed. But Haden's indignation cooled, he hesitated, he was too busy, in the end he refused to do anything. Perhaps he realized the mistake of offending an Academician. The artist outside the Academy, even a "surgeon-artist", never lost hope that one day he might be chosen.

Most of the newspapers held aloof from the controversy. Royal Academicians and Slade professors were above suspicion. But there was one weekly independent of creeds, afraid of nothing and a champion of truth. Henley asked Pennell to write an "Open Letter" to the *Scots Observer* which he did, a quiet, dignified letter—"where did you get your stately style, Joseph?" Charles Whibley asked him—pointing out the misunderstandings that must arise if such a precedent was countenanced. Henley sent copies to Haden, Herkomer, print dealers, every one concerned. He roused London editors

until the *St. James'* and the *Globe*, reviewing "An Idyll", called upon Herkomer to answer. He came up to London for the usual *Scots Observer* dinner where Pennell sat next to Whistler, told him the story, and next day took the book to Tite Street. Whistler had only to look at the prints to declare them photogravures. He was indignant. Hamerton, noncommittal, refused to be drawn in. The publishers joined the fray. Artists wrote, Walter Sickert among them. It was tremendously exciting. Herkomer said nothing until, late in April, he wrote to the *Times*, admitting that nine of the sixteen plates called etchings were photogravures; he used that process to save time,—where was the harm? The *Scots Observer* wound up the affair with a strong leader. Herkomer's reputation as etcher suffered and since then photogravures have been called by their right name.

As chance would have it, 1890 gave Pennell another opportunity to speak the truth, as he always did, though it might offend. "I never went in for good form," he said more than once, "dont know how to." In the spring he began his work in the French Cathedrals, the series opening with the Romanesque churches. Gradually they led him from Arles to Albi, Toulouse, Angoulême, Périgueux, Poitiers. Mrs. Van Rensselaer wrote him to explain the subjects she would like him to draw. He could not invariably agree with her point of view, she could not invariably agree with his. Some drawings, though fine, she rejected, some subjects demanded he refused to touch. So far they disagreed without unpleasantness. But when Périgueux and Angoulême were reached, Pennell was faced with unexpected difficulties. At Périgueux he found that Abadie, the

Government's architect, had restored the Cathedral to what he thought was its original Romanesque perfection by blowing up with dynamite additions and modifications that recorded the growth and history of the building through the centuries. At Angoulême restoration had left the Cathedral as characterless as an edifice without a past. Details Mrs. Van Rensselaer asked for had disappeared, effects she insisted upon were not to be found, and to that effect he wrote to the *Century*.

After this he went on to Poitiers, where I joined him at the beginning of August. An article on a "French Town in Summer" for *Harper's* called us to Toulouse; one for the *Century* to Martigues; a third, for whoever would take it, to the marvellous, then hardly known, little pilgrimage town of Rocamadour—"An Albert Dürer Town",—and it was *Harper's* that took it. At Toulouse St. Sernin, not the Cathedral, was the church chosen by Mrs. Van Rensselaer. It too had been restored out of reason. "Albi was fine!" Pennell wrote to Fisher Unwin, "but this place is vile—at least the church Mrs. Van R. has chosen." The August heat was unspeakable, yellow lines of sulphur in the gutters and at the bases of houses were reminders that cholera was close by, on the other side of the Pyrenees. For the first time he admitted the need of caution and, instead of putting up at a commercial hotel, we went to the best in the town: Hotel du Midi, disappeared on my last visit to Toulouse, but at that time one of the perfect hotels of France, with fresh airy rooms, admirable dinners and breakfasts, good wine, and, as it was in the far south, a courtyard full of oleanders, at that season

in bloom. We were a month in Toulouse for the St. Sernin drawings in addition to the Toulouse article. Southern towns should be visited in midsummer, for they were made to be seen in a blaze of sunlight, but the heat told on us. Our work fairly finished, we went up to Luchon for a breath of fresh air and to give Pennell the opportunity to add a peak of the Pyrenees to his conquest in the Alps.

In the meantime letters had been received from the *Century*, enclosing Mrs. Van Rensselaer's exposition of her Cathedral standpoint. At Luchon Pennell wrote his answer. The letter is one of his most characteristic and reveals in every line the seriousness with which he took his work and his unfailing respect for the art of illustration.

TO RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Luchon
20. 8. 90

Dear Mr. Gilder:

I have received your very kind and very encouraging letter of Aug. 1st.

As you have kindly been so frank with me and as you have sent me Mrs. Van Rensselaer's letter, I cannot help, in justice to myself, pointing out some of its inconsistencies. I can understand Mrs. Van Rensselaer's enthusiasm for a church like St. Sernin which does still show probably the original plan. But when one has no other method but the "very shallow way of approaching it" by drawing what one sees, what is the draughtsman to do when what he sees is brand-new, work put in not like the old building but in the way in which the modern restorer thinks the old men ought to have worked? When I go to the east end of St. Sernin and see the decorations around the windows and the windows themselves all cut out as if by machinery and not delightfully varied as in the old work, I can make nothing of any artistic value out of it. I can look at the few old capitals and bits of old mouldings that still remain in the place,

and go to the Toulouse Museum, and then realize what a fearful ruin has been made of the church. But I cannot draw it from the standpoint of Mr. Richardson. I can *look* beneath the restoration but Mrs. Van Rensselaer should remember that I must *draw* what is on the surface. Richardson would never have dreamed of taking the modern restoration of St. Sernin as anything but a model of very ordinary work of the most uninteresting kind. She speaks of his enthusiasm—he may have seen St. Sernin after it was rebuilt, but certainly not Angoulême and Périgueux where the restorations are either not yet complete or else have been finished since his death. This part of her argument therefore falls rather flat. But the most important point is that I am not drawing the *ideas* upon which she dwells at such length; I have to draw the *realities*. She ought to remember that I am sent to draw what she has been good enough to choose as "pretty subjects", that I cannot draw the architectural anatomy of some of the finest columns in France without putting in "the imitation of marbled paper and silver hearts strung round their tops" if they are there—she can write about them without dwelling upon their present appearance; I have to show it. She seems to be greatly concerned about my cooking or faking—as I expressed it—these drawings; what I meant was that when I come to one of these old churches and consult some of the living authorities upon it or look over some of the photographs taken before the restorations—and of neither photos nor authorities has she the monopoly—and find, instead of beautiful stained glass which ought to be there, blank white windows, or windows at times which are even yet unfinished; instead of exquisite workmanship on caps nothing but square uncut blocks of stone—the government appropriation having been exhausted in the meantime—I have got to intensify, for example, my lights and shadows and try to give some sort of pictorial effect which really is not there. The actual form of the building has always been studied and my drawing of it constructed with the greatest care. Considering that Mrs. Van Rensselaer is frank enough to admit that she 'could not be expected to remember all details and features exactly,' I think it would be rather presumptuous on her part to throw out any of my drawings because I have not treated certain details as she may think they ought to have been treated,

when they do not exist. I never should think of criticising Mrs. Van Rensselaer's scheme or methods, but I cannot help repeating that she ought to bear in mind that I cannot draw the ideas of the old men when their work is not visible.

Mrs. Pennell and I are now on our way to Martigues—Believe me

Very sincerely yours

Joseph Pennell.

Mrs. Van Rensselaer did not like the letter. I doubt if Gilder did. But when Pennell's plain speaking irritated them in the *Century* office, Drake told us that Gilder would say: "After all, who is there who can do architecture like Pennell?"

I need not explain that Martigues is the little fishing village lying between the Etang de Berre and the Etang de Caronte for since we made it the fashion, this "Little Venice" has become the haunt of artists. The only artists we found were Gervais and Moisson all day long painting large *machines* for next year's *Salon*, and a group of friends and followers of Monticelli whose method was to steep themselves in the beauty of the place until the moment they were forced to give it expression. For that moment we left them waiting. The town is picturesque, canals run though it from one salt-water lake to the other, houses and churches are glowing pink in the Provençal sunlight, fishing boats come and go, beyond the town are the low lines of the thyme-scented hills of Provence. It was a place of enchantment, and September was the month of the autumn games and feasts. We knew our Mistral by heart and when we heard that *Les Joûtes* were to come off at near Saint-Chamas, we hired a carriage and drove over for the day. "This must be done for the *Century*," Pennell said, as he invariably

said with each fresh discovery of the picturesque, and the next day, in lighter mood, he dictated and I wrote a letter to Gilder, with pauses when he added illustrations. The spirit of that gay, happy month—Cathedrals forgotten—is in his letter.

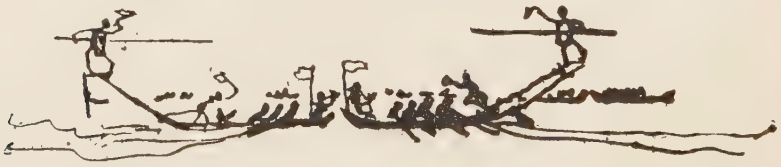
TO RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Martigues
10. 9. 90

Dear Mr. Gilder,
Yesterday we took a carriage,

and went to a little place called Saint-Chamas to see the annual *fête*. This consisted of boat races

and a performance called a "*joûte*"—that is to say, nothing more nor less than an ancient tournament held on the water:



The whole population of the town and the near country turned out on the lake in boats, two men, high up over the stern in the big boats each rowed by six men, simply tilted at each other with lances

six or eight feet long, and as the boats passed tried to push each other into the water—and succeeded.

The men were protected by big shields.

It was actually the most pictorial performance that we ever saw—we were simply carried away with it. It far exceeds anything Provençal which it has yet been our good fortune to see. These tournaments on water are given just on this lake, occasionally at Cette, where, only a week or so ago, one of the men was killed, and rarely, as a sort of show, at Marseilles. And yet they are entirely unknown out of this district. Not a foreigner, of course, was to be seen yesterday.

What we want is to know whether we cannot do this middle-age

spectacle as a short article like the bull-fight. Even the procession of the boats home from the tilting was tremendously fine.

And the scene on the shore with all the Arlesian costumes was no less delightful.

Next week there is going to be a *fête* at Arles and a *Ferrade* in the country near, which we are going to see. These *Farrades*, which are nothing more than western roundups in the Camargue, are becoming rarer and rarer. The majority even of Provençal people have never seen them. This one is already announced in the papers as of unusual interest. Do you not think something ought to be done with it?

The Martigues article will be *very*, VERY short.

Joseph P
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Gilder's answer was yes. He loved Provence as we did, and could not have enough of it in the magazine, and the *Century* published a series of short articles in 1891, and in 1892 the book, "Play in Provence." I lingered far beyond my allotted time that I might add chapters on the arrival of the bulls, driven in by the well-set-up cowboys of the Camargue for the bullfight, the intervals filled with the *Farandole* danced through the streets and gardens, to the music of the *tambourinaires*, as in Mistral and Daudet. I used to think the charm of Provence for Pennell was that down there—*là-bas*—the people toil as hard as they play, that they bring skill and strength to sports that to the British cricketer or American baseball player might seem a farce. He could understand people who do with all their might whatever they do, in playtime as in the hours of work.

Pennell stayed on. I hurried back to his father and my exhibitions. His first letter told of a sharp attack of cholera—sharp but happily short. Before his return Drake, of the *Century*, arrived in London on his way home with his only son, Frank. They had spent the summer in Spain, partly in Andalusia, crossing over into Africa. They were about to sail when Frank developed typhoid fever. Drake had few friends in London, he was much with us, and I was not blind to the impression the boy's illness and the father's loneliness made upon old Mr. Pennell. It was as if, for the first time, he realized his exile in London, though he did his best not to increase Drake's sadness by his own. Frank died late in October. Pennell was now home and Drake, until he sailed, was with us oftener than ever.

Before he was gone, Pennell was thinking less of Drake's troubles than of his own, for his father could not conceal his uneasiness about his own health and, worse, yielded to his increasing feebleness. The doctor could do little for him, we could do less. Before the end of November, death, in his case peaceful death—he died quietly in his sleep—took him from us. Pennell loved his father, whose fine qualities he appreciated and whose sympathetic encouragement meant everything to him in the difficult years when his mother withheld her confidence, doubting his genius. His grief was profound and I was glad that, as his father's sole executor, he was obliged to leave London at once for Philadelphia. Nothing could help him as much as action. His father had little to leave, but what little he had he left to his son. The business details did not take long, and Pennell got back shortly after the first of the year.

CHAPTER XVII

WE GO GYPSYING · WE MOVE TO NUMBER 14 BUCKINGHAM STREET · ANOTHER SUMMER IN THE FRENCH CATHEDRALS (1891–1892)

Many Cathedral summers were ahead of Pennell, and London was a convenient halfway station between the Continent and New York. Hitherto consideration for his father prevented his settling anywhere. Now he might venture upon a place of his own and escape the discomfort of lodgings and the nuisance of storage. The Barton Street house, indeed all this old Westminster quarter with its air of antiquity and innumerable associations, suited him, but the landlady and her family were less pleasing. He offered to take the house off their hands. They jumped at the offer. He understood why, when they asked a premium far beyond its value. He was disappointed but their refusal proved a stroke of good fortune, so much more to his taste and comfort was the home that the near future was to provide for him.

He decided to break up in the late spring (1891). Again Gilder put off the French Cathedral Series, the second time Mrs. Van Rensselaer was not ready, the second time he wrote us to "play about",—this summer in Hungary with the Gypsies. But first Paris, the *Salons* and the work they entailed had to be disposed of. Proofs

of our book "Play in Provence" had to be corrected and despatched to New York. By the end of May nothing remained to be done except to write the Introduction which Gilder agreed with me in thinking necessary. The reference to the *Saintes* in the following letter is to the chapter on the Feast of the *Saintes-Maries* down by the sea.

TO RICHARD WATSON GILDER

London 5. 26. 1891

Dear Mr. Gilder—I am very glad you like the *Saintes*—I think you are right about the introduction however—Mrs. P. told me the same thing before it went off. And you shall have it.

Roumanille died on Sunday in Avignon—and there is quite a boom on in Provence both at the Champ de Mars & the Champs Elysées—machine by Gervais. *Quite* unfit for publication however—Two bull fights by Montenard at Arles—Several Martigues. While the *Décadents* have discovered the country—*Mirèio* is on at the *Opéra Comique*. A new Edition of the *Roi de Carmargue* is out—and Provence has very much arrived in France—

T.F.U. was in Paris with me [us] and we had a high old time at the *Moulin Rouge*.

Yours
Joseph Pennell

When one goes Gypsying, one takes to the road. A safety bicycle for women was 1891's cycling invention, and on two safeties we rode across Belgium, Prussia, Saxony, Bohemia, Bavaria, Austria, into Hungary. No part of it was play, except in Gilder's sense. Our journey was written and drawn for the *Illustrated News*, of which Clement K. Shorter had recently been appointed editor. Our halts in Berlin, Dresden, Munich and Vienna were to give me time for articles on their National Galleries for the New York *Nation*. The longest halt—a month—

was in Budapest at the Hungaria, the Danube out of our windows, Gypsies playing their Czardas in the restaurant, and Pennell illustrating Mr. Albert Shaw's two articles on "Budapest: *The Rise of the Metropolis*." Not until the end of September were we off on our bicycles to Transylvania in pursuit of as many as we could find of its eighty odd thousand *Romani chals*. It was the perfect season for that romantic land, the sun hot at noon, mornings and evenings cool, grapes ripening for the picking, the crushing, the making into good Hungarian wine; everywhere picturesque towns and people and a variety of picturesque costumes beyond belief. Gypsies were on the road, camped in the fields, living in the towns, their musicians playing in the park, in the *cafés*, in the restaurants—no more beautiful month of our life together can I recall.

In Berlin, on the journey down, we ran unexpectedly into Harold Frederic, bound for Russia and the study on the spot of the Jewish question from the Jewish standpoint, a commission from the *New York Times* of which he was the London correspondent. We dined with him, he dined with us, we met in the *café*, and nowhere could he keep the Jews out of his talk until Pennell, who had never thought much about them one way or the other, began to think a good deal. Again in Vienna we ran into Frederic, again the talk was of Jews, but with a difference, for in the meanwhile, at Karlsbad, Pennell had discovered the Jews of Southeastern Europe and sketched them in long caftans and wide hats, little corkscrew curls over their ears and ill-kept beards, such Jews as he had never before seen. Frederic, despite his talk and researches, had not seen them yet, nor did he

know the Judengasse of Vienna, until Pennell, who his first day in the city explored it from end to end, led him there. Never was there a more astonished man. The real thing shattered his preconceived theories, he decided that at least one of his "stories" must have Pennell's illustrations, and he would propose articles to *Scribner's*. He was obliged to go right on to Russia. Pennell had to finish first in Budapest and Transylvania. But no sooner were we back at the Hungaria from our Gypsy hunt than, leaving me in Budapest, he started for Kiev and Berditchev, by way of Galicia and its Jew-filled towns.

His passport was not in order. The Russian Consul in Budapest, who should have known, but did not, signed it, and as the season was already late for Russia, Pennell preferred to take his chance than to wait for new papers. He understood his risk but did not let it bother him in Kiev, impressed as he was by the barbaric splendour of the great monastery, the Christlike monks, the throngs of pilgrims; nor in Berditchev, where he filled his sketchbook with caftans and ringlets and furred hats as he found them in the synagogue, the bazaar, the market place. He did not attempt to hide the sketchbook; he carried his large drawing boards into the streets. The result was his arrest. He has told the story, dramatically; it should be read in his words; no one could write it better, if as well.

He was turned out of the country after being detained, virtually a prisoner, during several days, his passport in the hands of the police, Cossacks watching him night and day. For the first time in his travels he was frightened. This was an entirely different matter from arrests in France. His letters and wires were stopped,

but his silence did not worry me. It was our understanding that if, when he was away, an interval passed without letters, it would mean that he was too busy to write. The affair got into the papers. August Pulzski, member of the Hungarian Parliament, and his wife hurried to the Hungaria to condole with me, and while they were condoling, Pennell appeared in a huge fur-lined coat—"The Russian Schube" of Whistler's lithograph—which I realized at a glance was destined to become a burden to me, as it was for many years, until at last the moths took pity on me and devoured it. He brought back, in addition to the *Schube*, a distressing cough. He should have gone to bed at once, and could not, because Colonel Frederick Grant, our Minister in Vienna, no doubt hoping for an international affair and fame in settling it, sent for him to come to Vienna. The first evening in the hotel the correspondent of the *Times* (London) heard Pennell cough and, horrified, summoned a doctor on his own initiative. With a look at Pennell the doctor diagnosed the case as galloping consumption; on careful examination it turned out nothing worse than a severe cold, aggravated by troublesome tonsils. I think the doctor was disappointed. I am sure Colonel Grant was when he found he could do nothing for us save ask us to dinner. Once out of the clutches of Russian officialdom, Pennell could make it his compliments. Whatever he thought of Russian methods, he could not question their thoroughness.

We were in London shortly before Christmas. One hot afternoon in Transylvania, resting by the roadside after a pull up a long mountain pass, not a living soul in sight, not as much as a chimney, a steeple or a trail

of smoke, it occurred to us that at the moment this desolate spot was our only home. As the French say, it gave furiously to think, and probably was an additional incentive to our determined search now for a home from which we could go, to which we could come, though we might not be always in it. Nothing practical can be done in London at holiday time and we spent Christmas with the Harold Frederics in Surbiton. *Scribner's*, for some reason, failed Pennell, but that did not lessen our friendship with Frederic, who was a good fellow, an excellent journalist, an interesting novelist, amusing, refreshingly American, with the right respect for a good dinner if with no feeling for artistic restraint in its proportions.

January passed, almost all February, and our hunt so far was fruitless. Charles Whibley had left Fig-Tree House in Millbank Street and Frank Podmore also. It was not what we wanted, a landlord lived on the premises as in Barton Street. But it was a nice old panelled house, the fig tree climbing up the front wall lent it distinction, the Thames could be seen from its windows. As nothing else presented itself, we took the rooms for a year, we signed an agreement, we paid down twenty pounds as a guarantee, and the next morning Pennell discovered Number 14 Buckingham Street close to Charing Cross. He could not resist the old house, on the outside as dingy and grimy as the Inns of Court, its flats called chambers to complete the likeness. The street, two blocks long and no less dingy, led down to Inigo Jones's Water Gate and the Embankment Gardens. Inside, three flights of incredibly steep stone stairs led up to our front door—two front doors, for we could

"sport our oak", as the English say. The rooms had been redecorated in the eighteenth century, and in all were Adams' fireplaces and mantelpieces. Our windows looked to the Thames as it flows under Waterloo Bridge and on, with a great curve to Blackfriars in the distance; high above river and bridges the dome of St. Paul's and the towers and spires of Wren's City. To the west we could see no farther than Charing Cross Bridge and Station but the dome, Pennell said, was to him worth the rent, if we had to go hungry. Pepys in his day had been a tenant, and Etty in his, as the big window in our dining room, which had been his studio, was a reminder. It was a house abounding in beauty, character and many memories.

The Millbank landlord let us off our agreement but held on to the twenty pounds. Pennell wasted not a second thought on the loss, braved the new expense without a tremor. Another lease was signed, this one for five years. He had the whole place repainted and repapered by a man who had worked with Cottier and for John M. Swan, the painter-sculptor, and who was no cheaper than the rent. We bought furniture at Liberty's, beds at Heal's, and haunted Wardour Street and Upper Baker Street shops. In between, Pennell prepared his papers on "The Jew at Home" for the *Illustrated News*, and Heinemann asked to make a book of them. Heinemann was a young, enterprising publisher, keen to add distinguished names to his list and with an eye for the new if it had merit as well as novelty. He did not shrink from the subject though we heard that his family, when too late, protested. The Appletons took the book for New York. At the same time, Fisher

Unwin was getting his scheme for an English "Pablo de Ségovie," with Vierge's illustrations and a Preface by Pennell, into definite shape. Its progress was interrupted delightfully by his marriage to Miss Jane Cobden, Richard Cobden's daughter and already our friend. We were invited to Midhurst in Sussex for the wedding.

The spring exhibitions began to open before we were established in our new quarters, not one more memorable than the Whistler Exhibition at Goupil's—the exhibition that turned the tide in his favour. David Croal Thomson, Goupil's London manager, spared neither care nor pains to have it as "the master" wished. Almost all the finest portraits were included, almost all the finest nocturnes. Press day was an event, the discussions of the critics, if begun in doubt, ended in unqualified faith, complete acceptance of the artist disdained by London for years. Whistler was in an inner room to which Pennell and Bob Stevenson—the two men who had done most to prepare the way for the triumph—were bidden. This was the beginning of Pennell's friendship with Whistler. They had met before, were on terms, each appreciating the other, but had got no farther. From this time onward, the casual friendship became and remained the close intimacy which Pennell, to the end, prized as one of the rarest gifts life bestowed upon him. The Grosvenor, the New Gallery, the Royal Academy opened in the accustomed quick succession. The two *Salons* called us to Paris urgent as our Buckingham Street problems might be, and, as the French Cathedrals could no longer wait, toward the end of May he cycled down to Clermont-Ferrand, planning from there to work his way to the north. Proofs

of the Vierge pursued him. When he was not drawing, he was keeping up an animated correspondence with Fisher Unwin. The book of his designing was not to be ruined in his absence. His determination to have it right fills his letters.

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

Clermont-Ferrand
28.May

Dear T.F.U. There is one matter in your letter of 24 May to Mrs. Pennell in which you say "we have come to the conclusion to omit the Printers' name from the title page—THEY DO NOT CARE FOR IT" Well if THEY really dont—I have my opinion of them—but it is quite unfit to send you even in a letter. Still I am not surprised really —I shouldent be surprised any longer at anything coming from 27 Pilgrim St.—But does it not occur to you that leaving off the printers' name (although THEY dont care for it) upsets the balance of the whole page and ruins UTTERLY—a piece of work—I spent days over!! Oh Fisher—Fisher you really are too dreadful!!! No the printers' name must stay and they must have a free add—Those things ARE head and tail pieces—because you never saw any like them—why aint they?

Yours
J. P.

At Le Puy, he forgot his own affairs for interest in Fisher Unwin's and his next letter is a proof of the wide unselfish interests of a man supposed to have been concerned about nobody save himself:

Poste Restante
Le Puy
Haute Loire
Monday

Cher Pêcheur—I have your letter to Mrs. P—I dont know who you could get to illustrate the bigger book in England—why dont you write *The Century* and ask them to get some one who knows the "cullud pusson"—

As to the "beastes" and birds—if you are going to make a fine thing of it why not have

Stacey Marks
John M. Swan
and Nettleship
and Young Hook

do it—You might get a fine thing with the four.

Yours
J. Pennell

What about that title page? It mustent be ruined—If you want to make a hit buy the illustrated Ed. of Zola's *Le Rêve*—Flammarion—the illustrations are immense—it is now coming out in parts—look it up (the book *isent* indecent)

Other letters from Le Puy, *Re Quevedo*, were short notes concerning the technical details of cover and proofs and prints. The picturesqueness of Le Puy overwhelmed, absorbed him. He was not content to draw the Cathedral and its background. He etched three plates and decided that we must do an article on "The Most Picturesque Place in the World", avoiding the responsibility of letting a horde of tourists loose upon it, by not mentioning its name—in the end, I fear, the best way we could have gone about making it widely known. But other towns were waiting. He stopped at St. Nectaire and there took the time not only to etch two small plates but to plan the details of binding and paper for the *Quevedo*.

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

Saint-Nectaire
Saturday 23 June

Quevedo

Dear Fisher—Everything seems to be going all right—as to the back the red leather under your name seemed to me rather loud. I only

suggest that if one copy could be printed with the gold T.F.U. on the sheepskin it might look better. Try it—Still I am not sure and leave it to you—I dont think this would mean any change in the binders' blocks—Ill send you the specimen back from Bourges—it has gone there with my traps—what colour are the end papers to be? As to the India proofs—the India paper itself seems all right only DONT for heaven's sake *print the text on it*—only the pictures. Of course I suppose this will require two printings—one for text and one for cuts but isent it worth while? and should not the cuts be pulled on a hand press? The mount should, it seems to me, be the handmade paper Mr. Laurie showed me, the same all through for text and full page mounts; unless it will make too bulky an affair. Give my love to everybody—Ive just ridden a hundred miles and am a little tired—write *Poste Restante* Bourges

Cher J. P.

At Bourges I did most of the letter-writing and again at Le Mans, where we stumbled into Lewis F. Day, his wife and daughter. He was studying the stained glass in the Cathedral and we found him an enthusiast in his work, a good talker out of it. We had one excitement, the discovery of row upon row of freshly dug graves in the cemetery by the river, our first intimation of cholera in the town. I wrote in frantic haste to Fisher Unwin for a bottle of Collis Brown's Chlorodyne, the Briton's inseparable companion in the East, Pennell refusing to return to London with me when my newspapers called me back, or to go farther from Le Mans than Chartres, cholera or no cholera. The book at last was ready, the great question was to send it to the right papers for review and to arrange an exhibition of the original drawings. Advice on these matters was offered lavishly and with wisdom.

Chartres
Wednesday

My dear Fisher . . . . . The only thing about Vierge is the expense—I dont know if he will be able to afford it [the Exhibition]—of course he could send the drawings unframed over cheaply but to pack up the large things and send them would cost a lot of money and he is I know a poor man. I will see him anyway.

As to myself—I must tell you frankly I cant afford to get 80 or one hundred frames for my things—for seriously this summer I shant make my expenses out of my drawings—

These Cathedrals though they delight me are hard, hard work—and unless something comes out of them in the future I shall be very much in a hole—I want to help you all I can—but this summer if it wasent for the Missus I should be dead broke

That's a fact

J. P.

Tuesday

My Dear Fisher

Im coming or starting back tomorrow. Will see Vierge Thursday.

Whibley who was down here yesterday says I may do the Cole for *The Observer* so that's all right and Ill write Massingham when I get back—*keep the copies up your sleeve*—and we'll talk over things as soon as I have any decent clo's. I look like this

You would be shocked

Jo P.

Paris Thursday

My Dear Fisher—I saw Vierge this morning—and it may interest you to know that he is willing to have the show on your terms (or as you suggest) provided it dont cost him too much—he will send over the *Pablo* drawings taking them out of the glass but retaining the passepartout mounts blue or gold with which they look very well, they could then be put on screens, or against cheap draperies, he will also send all the other mounted stuff he has about the place—

He says if the packing etc. costs a *lot* of money he hopes you will help him out but he will write himself

He is only willing to sell the *Pablo* things as a whole—*not* separately—he will sell and send prices of all the others singly—You should have a decent catalogue made with an introduction—you might use some of my stuff—a compilation from *Pablo*, *Pen Drawing* and *The Portfolio*.

Hamerton whom I saw to-day is going to review the book in *The Portfolio*—(Send some Prospectuses to the *Cercle Américain*, Boulevard Montparnasse, Paris—) and it looks very well in the middle of Galignani's window. I really believe it will go. I shall be back on Sunday.

J. P.

Every year he rebelled against leaving the Cathedrals, but seldom more than that autumn, for to him Chartres was "heavenly beyond words." The French provincial town, however, is cold in winter, the French Cathedral colder.

CHAPTER XVIII

LIFE IN BUCKINGHAM STREET · PARIS, LAON AND REIMS · THE CHICAGO EXHIBITION (1892–1893)

Of Pennell's years in Buckingham Street it is hard to write, so much was accomplished, so much happened, and they were his gayest.

Our evenings in Barton Street towards the end were seldom spent alone; in Buckingham Street we were more wholly, if agreeably, at the mercy of our friends. Perhaps it was to concentrate their friendliness that we began to be "at home" on Thursday evening, perhaps because Thursday was the evening Henley and his "young men" chose to descend upon us. Henley with the *Scots*, transformed into the *National Observer*, had come up to London, the editorial offices in Great College Street, but the printers, the Ballantynes, in Covent Garden, a five or six minutes' walk from us. The paper went to press on Thursday and, about ten o'clock, the editorial work disposed of, the editorial staff in the mood for rest, recreation and refreshment, adjourned to Buckingham Street. Charles Whibley, Marriott Watson, George Steevens, Wilfred Pollock were most usually in Henley's train, all ready fighters, and, all excepting Steevens, indefatigable talkers.

The innumerable writers about the Nineties find the great men of the decade in a little group of anæmic

and rather degenerate youths. But not one of this exotic set was so conspicuous a figure or exerted so powerful an influence as Henley, who was to the young writer the inspiration that Whistler was to the young artist. The *National Observer* was the training ground for many of the authors and journalists whose names remain. The paper was hated, feared for its plain speaking, and Henley was hated and feared as cordially; the inevitable fate of the critic whose eloquence does not lag behind his honesty, as Pennell was rapidly learning. His reward is the no less genuine adoration of the few. "Now I have conquered Henley, I aint fraid of the divvle himself," Conrad wrote to Edward Garnett, and nothing could express better the attitude of Henley's contemporaries. Moreover, when they ceased to tremble, they began to love him.

Some of Henley's enemies were our friends, among them Walter Crane and other Arts-and-Craftsmen who also enjoyed our Thursdays. Henley had no use for the affectations of William Morris and his disciples, and they had no use for him. Nor were they in sympathy with the New English Art Club men, of whom D. S. MacColl, Walter Sickert, Wilson Steer, Henry Tonks, Charles Furse, Arthur Tomson were among our visitors. It was well we had three rooms in which the party could be distributed, and my anxiety was to make sure of the distribution. As time went on, Phil May, silent, smiling, kindly, was the centre round whom clustered the illustrators: A. S. Hartrick, E. J. Sullivan, Raven-Hill, Edgar Wilson. The Art Workers' Guild sent deputies, William Strang one of the most welcome. So did the independent groups, beautiful, tragic Graham Tom-

son, wife of Arthur, and afterward of Marriott Watson; Violet Hunt, with her Burne-Jones face and unfailing wit; the Henry Harlands, the Henry Normans, Legge, Fisher Unwin; so did the stray foreigners, Félix Buhot, or one or more of the *Century* staff; so did the architects, who came in herds. Few of the crowd one met on those evenings had not already a name or else were not on the point of making one. We provided no amusements—no music, no cards, no dancing, no recitations. Our refreshments were limited to the Englishman's indispensable whiskey-and-soda, cigars, cigarettes, though, when I was sure wives were to be with us, claret and cake might be added. No particular dress was imperative. Our friends could present themselves as they were, straight from the workshop or a formal dinner. The chance to talk was the sole attraction. It was the entertainment Pennell best understood. To waste one's time card-playing, dancing, listening to music, when one could talk and argue and fight it out, was to him incomprehensible. And to talk at one's ease meant to dispense with formality. He could be the most formal of men on formal occasions. But his preference was for talk when "the Barriers of Ceremony", those laws of polite living, are let down, and the talk of our Thursday evenings was of the kind that, as you get used to it, makes it hard to put up with any other. Never, anywhere else, have I heard such talk, every one except Phil May, George Steevens and myself talking: Henley at a window where he could look to St. Paul's and Cleopatra's Needle—"that great Phallic symbol flaunting itself in the London night", he would say—his worshipping group round him; Pennell, the most in-

veterate talker of them all, in the studio with his group; Phil May, astride his chair, glass in his hand, cigar in his mouth, surrounded by admirers who knew how to converse with his silence; late comers in the dining room, foraging for themselves; the crowded-out filling the hall; and, coming and going in their midst, Bowen, our old English servant, who, as the sister of a man in the Lord Mayor's service, was shocked by the strange company, but as our "general", bore up as best she could. Also going and coming was our adorable William Penn, a handsome tabby, by nature affectionate and sociable, hurt when not noticed, and in revenge curling himself up and sleeping on the smartest coat or daintiest hat until discovered. They were wonderful evenings while they lasted.

At the start they did not interfere with work. The Le Puy, Bourges, Le Mans, Chartres drawings were finished and sent to New York. The Vierge Exhibition opened in Clifford's Inn Hall, much talked about, but the drawings remained unsold because of Vierge's refusal to sell them separately. Newspaper work went on. Massingham became Assistant Editor of the *Daily Chronicle* and promptly secured Pennell for the Art Department, so that two London dailies called for weekly art columns, notices of art exhibitions and reviews of art books. Our relations with the *Pall Mall* were strengthened by the change in proprietor and editor. Astor bought the paper and sought to give it social dignity by appointing as editor Harry Cust, Lord Brownlow's nephew and heir. Cust, without newspaper experience, was sensible enough to admit the need of guidance and asked it of Henley. Two of Henley's

"young men", George Steevens and Marriott Watson, were taken on the staff, and many contributors to the *National Observer*, among them ourselves, were borrowed. While one more conspicuous figure was added to our Thursday evenings: Iwan-Müller, half Russian, a giant of a man, an accomplished journalist, a talker like the rest, who resigned from his Manchester paper for the post of assistant editor under Cust.

About this time too Beardsley, with his portfolio under his arm, appeared in Buckingham Street. Pennell was interested, was blind neither to the immaturity, the affectation of some of the drawings in the portfolio, nor to the promise, the feeling for line, the sympathetic use of pen-and-ink in others. Beardsley appreciated Pennell with whom, to the end, he remained the same simple, natural youth he was in the beginning. When Charles Holme started the *Studio*, Lewis Hind, the first editor, determined to make Beardsley a feature of the first number and publish an article about him, illustrated by his "Procession of Joan of Arc entering Orleans", drawings from his "Morte d'Arthur" and examples of his Japanese re-echoes. The story has been often told. The latest to tell it is Haldane Macfall, a contemporary. Hind, he says, "commissioned Joseph Pennell, as being one of the widest read critics, to write the appreciation of the designs and blazon Beardsley abroad—and while Pennell was plainly more than a little perplexed by all the enthusiasm poured into his ears, he undertook the job." Pennell's version is "I hedged", doubtful as he was if anything would come of the promise. Beardsley did not see the hedging, was enchanted, let himself go in a letter to G. F. Scotson

LONDON FROM THE BUCKINGHAM STREET ROOF

Drawing by Joseph Pennell

Clark: "Joseph Pennell has just written a grand article on me in the forthcoming number of *The Studio* . . . I shall blush to quote the article." The first number of the *Studio* appeared in April, 1893. What the article did for Beardsley—the article by Pennell, the "man who could make his voice heard", who "was to champion the lad through rain and shine, through black and sunny days"—Mr. Macfall also points out. I quote him again for it is a just tribute to Pennell to whom his contemporaries often showed themselves less generous:

> It is to Pennell's eternal credit for artistic honesty and critical judgment that he did not advertise it, [Beardsley's first work] at anything more than its solid value. Pennell was writing for a new magazine of arts and crafts; and his fierce championship of process reproduction was as much a part of his aim as was Beardsley's art—and all of us who have been saved from the vile debauching of our line-work by the average wood-engravers owe it largely to Pennell that process-reproduction won through—and not least of all Beardsley. What Pennell says about Beardsley is sober and just and appreciative; but it was when Beardsley developed far vaster powers and rose to a marvellous style that Pennell championed him, most fitly, to the day he lay down and died.

To commissioned work Pennell added work for his own pleasure. Buckingham Street windows began to supply subjects of which he never wearied during the sixteen years he lived behind them: Waterloo Bridge, the Thames with its barges, St. Paul's, the Embankment Gardens, Cleopatra's Needle, the Surrey Side with its shot tower, brewery and factories, the street in front of Charing Cross Underground Station under Charing Cross Bridge. He got out the plates made off and on in the

Eighties and put away, unprinted, out of sheer discouragement. And some time that winter he bought a press from Henley's brother Anthony, an old press with a wooden wheel which it took muscle to turn. When I look back to him as he was in the Nineties, I seem to see him oftenest in his long grey French blouse, hanging on to that wheel for dear life. Out too came his water-colour box, though few were allowed to see him use it. The bridges, brewery and shot tower, St. Paul's, Wren's City were sketched in colour as well as in black-and-white, effects varying hour by hour with the ever varying play of London's sunshine and mist. And Pennell himself was beginning to be well known in Paris. Devambez had his prints in the Nineties, later on Ströhlen and he exhibited with the *Peintres-Graveurs* of which Society he was a member.

At the end of the winter of 1893, the large London Exhibitions disposed of, he set off early in May on his summer's wanderings. I went with him as far as Paris, in company with the usual group of London critics, artists and writers who made the journey together for several years: Bob Stevenson, D. S. MacColl, Charles Whibley, Charles Furse, Henry Harland, Robert Ross, Beardsley—every one of them disposed to discuss, to argue, to wrangle over every picture of promise or accomplishment in the two *Salons*. All the way along the *Quais*, or in the *bâteau-mouche*, to the Champ-de-Mars, it was talk. In front of every painting, every sculpture, every drawing that attracted their attention, it was talk, their best *apéritif* before the midday breakfast. And again talk on the afternoon excursion to Saint-Cloud, Saint-Germain, Fontainebleau, or during the

rambles along the *Quais* and to the *Odéon* and *Palais-Royal* bookshops in search of portfolios, like the memorable "*L'Estampe Originale*" or books illustrated by the men of the Thirties or the men of the day: Willette, Steinlen, Caran D'Ache, Toulouse-Lautrec, Carloz Schwabe. The history should be written of the Paris of the Nineties, so much more alive than London, so quivering with experiment, so rich in production. And talk was renewed over the good dinner, over the gay visits, often with Henry Harland as guide, to Salis' *Chat Noir*, Bruant's *Mirliton*, the *Tréteaux de Tabarin*, the *Moulin Rouge*, with the famous La Goulue and her *Quadrille*, *Les Ambassadeurs*,—or was it the *Scala*?—with Yvette Guilbert and her long black gloves. The spring of 1893 contributed a new delight, our friendship with Whistler at last established on a solid basis. We breakfasted and dined in the Rue du Bac, climbed the stairs to the high studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs.

Pennell stayed on in Paris during a great part of the spring and summer, working in Saint Denis and Notre-Dame, leaving once for the churches of Coutances and Caen. In Notre-Dame, Viollet-le-Duc oppressed him almost as much as Abadie in Périgueux. His happiest hours were on the roof among the devils and monsters. Once Whistler toiled up the long winding stairway to invite him to breakfast. Had Whistler persevered in asking him to breakfast only, coolness might have fallen upon the friendship. But Pennell made it clear that he was in Paris to work and Whistler, realizing this, asked him to come and help bite and print plates that were waiting, an invitation more to Pennell's fancy. He knew

what he would learn. He was hours with Whistler in the garden of the Rue du Bac biting plates, hours in the studio at the press. He got out his own plates, etched the large "*Stryge*" and the series of little gardens, *cafés*, streets, *brasseries*. It was the summer of the once famous Sarah Brown Students' Revolution, originating in a once famous incident at the *Quatz' Arts* Ball, and at the Hotel d'Harcourt, where he was staying, he was in the midst of it all. One Cathedral article could not exhaust the material Paris was providing and, as was invariably the case, many letters went to the *Century* suggesting more subjects. Besides, working in the Cathedrals took a good deal out of him. His eyes, never strong, suffered, until at times he was glad to find relief in easier problems and rest his eyes in the study of simpler, less exacting details, by a light not quite so religious and dim.

TO MR. ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON

June 2
Paris
Up in a *garrett looking over Notre-Dame*

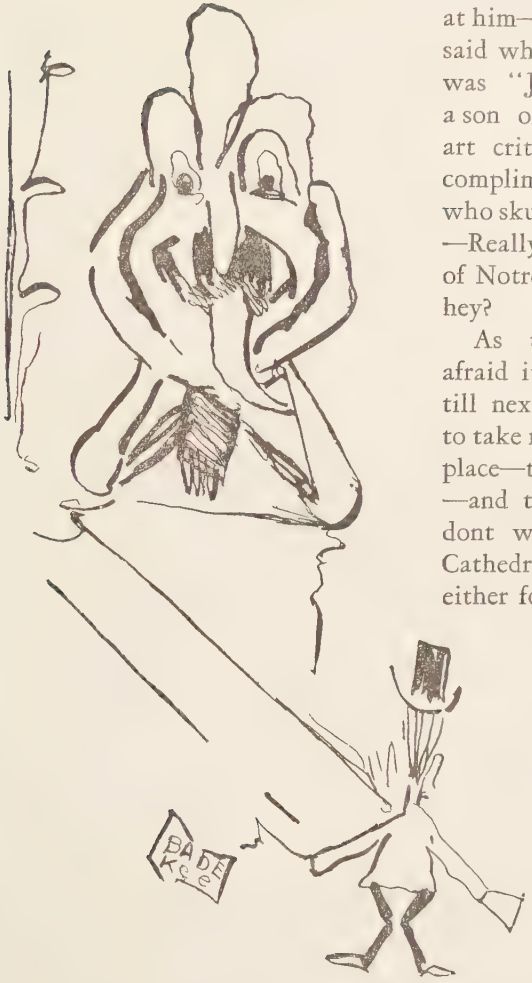
My dear Johnson—

I shall look forward to the Le Puy article with interest—I want to see the result of the triangular affair—

I have an idea

as usual

I am working at Mrs. V. R.'s cathedrals and it seems to me an article —NOT architectural—on the spectres, spooks, devils—ghosts—beasts—fiends which as large as life parade themselves up here might work up stunningly—and there are any amount of stories about these spectres—and they are a fearsome lot too, why as I was working away to-day—a fellow countryman came up—and the first thing he saw was this looking



at him—and the first thing he said when he got his breath was "J——s C——t—what a son of a b——h"—that's art criticism for you and a compliment to the old carver who skulped it,

—Really I think the spooks of Notre-Dame—would go—hey?

As to Dalmatia—I am afraid it will have to go on till next spring—for I want to take my time to finish this place—two months—at least—and then to Laon—and I dont want to hurry these Cathedrals — nor Dalmatia either for that matter and if I can get through by the end of August I'll go—otherwise I think it had better hang over till next spring, first thing—

J. P.

Paris, June 10.

Dear Mr. Johnson—

As Fraser dont want me to turn in more than three Cathedral articles this summer—what do you say to my staying here all the time save August when I shall do Laon—and making a series of little etchings in the streets of Paris like the James article on London. The place interests me enormously—and I should like to do it. Again Whistler is very chummy just now—and I am going to work in his

studio and help print—and he has offered to help me bite my plates and I think I could get him to let you have one or two of his. Really I could get some stunning stuff here—and its quite new and fresh for me. Mrs. Pennell could write the article—or someone else. Please let me do it?—Ive finished Caen and Notre-Dame—and it will only take about a month at Laon—so really I have an awfully good chance to do the Gargoyles and the streets here—which really appeal to me enormously at present.

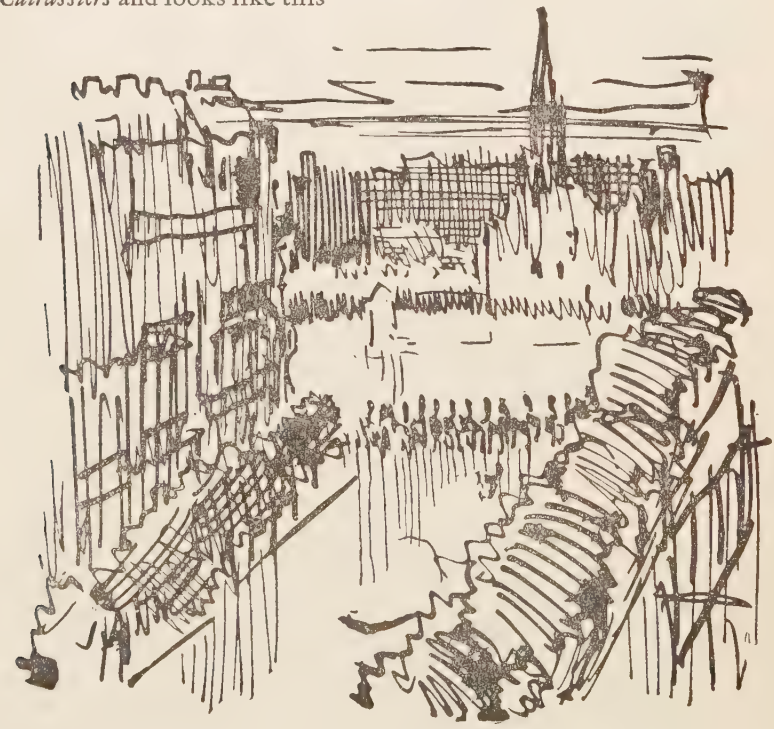
Dont these things strike you

J. Pennell

TO W. LEWIS FRASER

Paris, July 4—

On the Boul' Mich in a State of Siege My Dear Fraser, such is the fact. I am shut up—cant get in or out—the Boulevard is held by *Cuirassiers* and looks like this



In the Rue de Rennes
Voila l' armée!! Trottons!!!

Later in June the Whistlers went off to Brittany, but Pennell was not alone. My sister, Helen Robins, had come from Philadelphia for the summer and, after her first few weeks with me in London, he offered to show her Paris.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

My dear Helen—Elizabeth can put you in any train that suits her best—only let me know when it will or shall or should arrive here and see that you stay in it among the *dames seules* and dont let yourself be led away by your passions on the way—Ill try to console you on your arrival but I think Im that played out that Im more of a wreck than your very susceptible heart—

Anyway we will try and bear up together like a couple of broken up somethings or others

This is a lovely straw hat the Zed-2 blew away in the dark arms
You are weeping in your handkerchief for your blighted young life
I hope your goose aint like this but it may be
PENNELL

Helen was young, just out of Bryn Mawr College, she was gay, even as a small child she had always amused him; he was the better for a congenial companion. At the end of a month or so alone, away from home, his nerves were apt to get the better of him. I met them in Laon, the town set nobly upon its hill, the Cathedral, as so many had been, "the loveliest and most enchanting of them all", no motorists in the Nineties to disturb its peace, scarcely a foreigner to invade its old streets and ruin its characteristic pro-

vincial hotel. We had the place virtually to ourselves and our friends: Leonard Whibley, his sister, and an elderly Scotchman, delightful as a man, indifferent as an artist, for whom many commercial years in India had bought freedom to make water colours in any part of the world he wanted. In Reims Pennell was alone, his room in that good hotel on the *Place* just opposite the Cathedral. He could sit at his window, undisturbed, studying and drawing the most flamboyant of flamboyant façades. His drawings here were large vigorous sketches, put down directly and swiftly on his paper without the preliminary mechanical perspectives which had begun to bore him,—though it was because he had learned so much from these perspectives that he could now draw architecture with such ease and assurance. The effort, however, took more out of him than he realized.

His idea of resting brain and hands was to do something else equally strenuous. The something else this time was a journey to Chicago and the Columbian Exhibition. He bought his ticket for Saturday, September the sixteenth. His few days in London were not idle. On the margin of the letter to Mr. Johnson about the Devils of Notre-Dame, Gilder wrote "This might be amusing", but failed to take advantage of it. And now Pennell showed the drawings to the *Pall Mall* editors who secured them promptly for their weekly *Budget*. He showed them also to Mr. Thomson at Goupil's, where he went to see what progress had been made with a portfolio of London etchings they proposed to publish. Both visits were so satisfactory that he left London in much better spirits.

TO MR. DAVID CROAL THOMSON

14. Buckingham Street
Strand, W.C.
Friday Night
1893

Dear Mr. Thomson,

I hope I did not keep you at your place this evening but I never got an answer till nearly 8 p.m.—I have sold the right of reproduction of the entire series of the Devils—reserving however the right of Exhibition—if you wish it—of the originals.

The Pall Mall people have purchased them—and they have asked for the refusal—or rather first chance at the originals from the exhibition—Mrs. Pennell will call in a day or so and talk to you about the matter—

Yours sincerely
Joseph Pennell

Ever written to the Whistlers? I thought the London things mounted up extremely well—in fact altogether I go off rather peart

Below the letter is a sketch of himself, portfolio under his arm, bag in his hand, one long leg stretching from the dome of St. Paul's, the other reaching out to the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour.

In the nine years since our marriage he had been home but once, in 1891, a sad, short visit for the settlement of his father's estate. On this visit, he was without cares, he could look about him, see his country with the eyes of the vigilant, acute observer, also of the prodigal returned. He could see the big Fair with the eyes of one to whom European Exhibitions were familiar. On his journey back in the train from Chicago to New York he wrote two short letters that sum up in the fewest words his impressions. The first was to Mr. J. McLure Hamilton, the distinguished American

painter. He and his wife, like us, lived in London, and they had come home to visit the Exhibition.

TO MR. JOHN McLURE HAMILTON

Exposition Flyer
Lake Shore Route
October 5. 1893

My dear Hamilton,

What has become of you—Where are you—Ive been and Im coming away—going home really—If you couldnt stand Philadelphia what will or have you done with Chicago?—and what of the show?—they have treated you infernally—and I didnt hesitate to say so to all the powers I saw—and such a scurrilous lot as they were—but the buildings are gorgeous—aint they?

And the town is hell—aint it?

and well—Philadelphia and London are good enough for me—and Ive no more ambition to see my native land.

And dont you wish you were sailing as I am day after to-morrow.

And I hope you will look in at 14 Buckingham St. soon—for Ill be there I hope in a week.

Yours
J. Pennell

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

Exposition Flier
Wagner Vestibule Train
via N.Y. Central and
Lake Shore Route
October
Fifth
1893

?

I havent the faintest idea where we are—but were running like——yes we are—

My dearest Helen, I wish you had come for Ive had an awfully good time.

Seen lots of people—got my medal—everybody got one however—so its cheap.

The buildings are simply perfect—its like an old master—a Claude from the National Gallery—up to date.

Im too tired to write more than a line but I will write you from the steamer. I expect to sail Saturday on the North German Lloyd. But of course I cant really tell till I get to N.Y. to-morrow when Ill write you more coherently.

Good night
J. P.

CHAPTER XIX

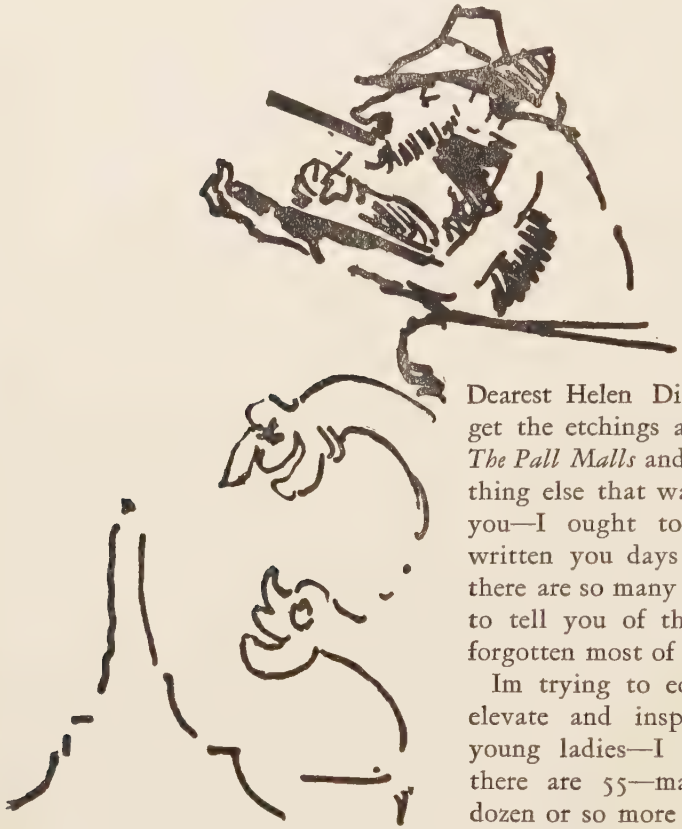
SLADE SCHOOL LECTURES · THE LONDON ETCHINGS · THE YELLOW BOOK (1893–1894)

By the middle of October Pennell was in London, getting out the Paris plates, which he had not time to bite before his journey. On the twenty-fifth he wrote to Helen, "I am just in the midst of biting the *Stryge*—the plate we did together on the top of Notre-Dame." As if he had not as much to do as any one man could, he undertook, when asked by his old friend Bernard Hall, to buy the Black-and-White for the Melbourne National Gallery, of which Mr. Hall had become the director; and, at the request of Professor Fred Brown, to lecture on "Illustration" at the Slade School, University College. He was the readier to deliver these lectures because of his unfailing eagerness to uphold the dignity of illustration as an art. He wrote "Pen Drawing" with this in view, and he thought by talking to students he could accomplish more than by writing, though he had not as yet discovered how great was his influence over students and his genius for teaching.

His gaiety when work went well, as it did that winter, overflows in a letter to Helen written on Christmas Eve. "James," perhaps I should state, was our first cat, Jimmy Whistler, so called because he was all black with one white lock, the predecessor of William Penn who, in

his turn, was succeeded by Bobby. I often used to think that not to have seen Joseph Pennell dropping his work to open the door for James the rake, wrapping up William the sybarite in a red Liberty blanket for the night, trying to relieve the gloom of our poor melancholy Bobby, was not to know the depths of tenderness he was shy of letting people suspect him of.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS



Dearest Helen Did you get the etchings and all *The Pall Malls* and every thing else that was sent you—I ought to have written you days ago—there are so many things to tell you of that Ive forgotten most of em.

Im trying to educate, elevate and inspire 55 young ladies—I believe there are 55—maybe a dozen or so more or less —I do not know any of

em by name—but they are very much nicer to me than you ever were—So just imagine what I have to endure!!! I think I shall have to escape from them back to you, so Mam (that's a regal title) please to pack your trunk and take your ticket for Gibraltar somewhere about the end of June—you will sail for that port with sealed orders and when you open them you will have raTHER! a surprise —What a swell you are becoming coaching the elderly young person —am I to be taken in hand next Spring—I fear you are becoming debauched—two teas in a week—No H.F. hasnt sent on any photos.

Lang's *Aucassin* is out of print but Ill try and find you one.

Charles W. and Iwan Müller went to Spain for a fortnight—They are just back and talk like a pair of Cooks Tourists and were so insufferable that we refused to go and spend Xmas with them, especially as we have to stay home and nurse James who is sick of a fever—and he had to have a doctor and Bowen and Mrs. Burden and the Housekeeper to hold him while they fed him with a spoon and he cussed most horrid so that the Church Associashun—(!) [tenants of 14 Buckingham Street] went and shut up and are taking a weeks holiday—fact—

Of course the right thing for Alice Cruise to do would be to pack up and come over here and study with me—but as she may not be able to do that I would advise her to go and see Mrs. Alice Barber Stephens—if she's still in Philada and take Mrs. Stevens (or tephens) advice. From your description of her I should imagine her artistic whatyoumay call it must be wonderful—

Addieu
Tis Xmas Eve
I go to meet my
ownest Louise
Jo P.

When, in 1889, the first edition of "Pen Drawing" was exhausted in England, almost as soon as published, he urged an immediate second edition, believing that nothing succeeds like success, the Publishers were more timid. The book had not gone so fast in the American

edition and this was to them a reason for discretion. But by the winter of 1894, no copies were left in America and the Macmillans suggested trying the book's fortunes a second time. Pennell rejoiced. It meant the chance to correct, revise, add, improve. His faith had not wavered in illustration as "an important, vital, living branch of the Fine Arts", nor in pen-and-ink as a sympathetic medium for the illustrator. He had learned much since writing the book, his judgment had been chastened, he was conscious of gaps. "Pen Drawing" he thought weakest in the German section, if it could be said to have a German section. His prowlings along the *Quais* and in the bookshops of Paris yielded, among other things, German books extremely well illustrated. In the *Salons* in German galleries and museums he had seen German drawings. To make doubly sure of his facts, he consulted German authorities, especially Professor Doctor Hans W. Singer, of the Dresden Gallery Print Room, whom he knew by name and reputation. The correspondence led to a friendship in which until the last there was never a break. The earliest letters are mostly technical or made up of lists of names—What of this or that painter? does he illustrate? Does he draw with a pen? Should he be included? But one among them reveals a modesty and generosity that Pennell's contemporaries were not always inclined to credit him with. Just as it was said that his praise was for none save Whistler and himself, when he lavished it liberally on Menzel and Vierge, Keene and Beardsley and too many to name; so it was thought no commission offered was allowed to slip out of his hands, when there are illustrators who could, if they would, tell a different tale. This

letter to Doctor Singer is only one of innumerable instances of his readiness to turn work over to others if he was sure that their knowledge or talent for it surpassed his own.

TO PROFESSOR DR. HANS W. SINGER

14, Buckingham Street
Strand, W.C.
2. 28. 94

Dear Sir—I have your letter of 25th I have just obtained one of Otto Greiner's drawings which is most interesting.

Kirchner's work I do not know—and though I admire enormously Liebermann's and Von Uhde's paintings I hardly think they have done enough pen work—at least I have not seen it—to include them in a special treatise like this.

By the way I have been asked by the Editor of *The Studio* Mr. Gleeson White to do a series of articles for his magazine on the German mystics Boecklin, Klinger, Stuck, Thoma, Trübner, etc.—but I have told the Editor you could do it much better than I could, and Ive no doubt you will hear from him—

I think you could do a most interesting series on these men who are I think the artists of Germany and who should be known here.

Yours sincerely
Joseph Pennell

Has Van Uhde's Christ and the Children been published? Do you know where? I think I will write him myself.

A fortnight later, in a short letter: "I have written Mr. Gleeson White of *The Studio* that you would undertake an article for him."

Pennell was busy with another publication which interested him no less: the collection of London etchings which were being mounted when he went to Chicago. In a short prefatory note he describes them as "simply records of things seen at various times and in different

parts of London . . . often the outcome of a ramble with a few plates in my pocket, or at times only a scrap of paper. In no sense are they the result of a tour in search of the picturesque . . . Their existence is the only reason for their publication. But they were made for my own pleasure; if they please any one else, so much the better." The plates were small, light, they could be carried in comfort—not the giants of plates like Haden's "Breaking up of the Agammemnon" that miraculously fitted into the tail pocket of his dress coat. In Westminster it had become almost a habit with Pennell to carry one along when he went out to draw. The result was a surprising variety in the twenty included in the collection: London markets—Smithfield, Leadenhall, Covent Garden; London bridges—Tower, London, Blackfriars, Waterloo, Vauxhall; the Thames—from Greenwich to Lambeth, at the turn of the tide and at night, with the London lights along the river front; London churches—St. Paul's, St. Martin's; bits of streets—among them Regent Quadrant which he was to etch again and to draw for the first number of the *Savoy*, a beautiful impression of a beautiful architectural design that has vanished. Much besides of the Old London survives in the series—little penny steamboats, hansoms and horse-busses, broken-down four-wheelers with venerable horses and dozing drivers at the cab-stands; posters advertising Mrs. Langtry and the boxing Kangaroo of the Aquarium. He was etching all these things for himself, it is true, but he produced a valuable chronicle of Nineteenth-Century London. Already, wherever he passed, he had been picking up old paper, white and green, and he used it for the etchings, printed

on his own press. All are signed "Jo Pennell del. sc. imp." At the top of some of the green sheets is the stamp of the *République Française* and alongside, written by him in pencil for the guidance of the mounter, "dont cut" he could not bear to destroy this evidence of the paper's age and he knew it would be hidden by the mount. Already too he was experimenting in a method adapted to the rendering of night effects in London. Four of the prints are sandpaper aquatints.

He was careful of every detail. The prints were mounted by Nigel Henley, the only one of Henley's brothers who got to the top of his chosen profession and remained there. He worked for the British Museum and everything he did was well done. Instead of the customary portfolio, he made a solander case, deep red with gilt lettering and edges. The text was printed by the Constables. Boussod, Valadon and Company were the publishers. On the fourth page of the introductory matter the statement that fifteen sets of the etchings were printed, of which twelve were for sale, is signed by Joseph Pennell. D. C. Thomson signed for the publishers a further statement that the plates had been destroyed. Nothing was wanting save collectors to buy up the edition. It is hard to understand why they did not. The etchings are in handling, more full of light and atmosphere and movement than the Philadelphia, New Orleans and Italian series. And yet few were sold; most of the sets were broken up. The only complete one I know of to-day, though others may exist, is Mr. Ballard's.

A third publication called for Pennell's attention

though, for the actual form in which it appeared, he was not responsible. The drawings of the Devils of Notre-Dame had so excited the *Pall Mall* staff, from Cust down, that they were unwilling to let the reproductions lie forgotten in the pages of the *Budget*. With Pennell's consent, they undertook to republish them in a portfolio. The reproductions were mounted and left loose, in the manner of etchings and engravings. Bob Stevenson's "descriptive text", of which Pennell approved, was reprinted. Stevenson was in sympathy with the subject, he wrote of it with understanding and picturesqueness, he was concerned with the Devils rather than the drawings, though had they not pleased him he would not have written at all—that is the kind of writer and critic he was. In fact, they pleased him so well that, referring to Pennell's rendering of the "brute female devil", he said, "this is as fine a drawing as any of them and is only inferior to an etching of *Le Stryge* by Mr. Pennell which . . . . in every point, except perhaps the face, surpasses Méryon's celebrated plate of the same subject." Pennell was satisfied with the reproductions, by Carl Hentschel, about the best photo-engraver at that time in London. He did not object to the printing by J. S. Virtue and Company. But half his pleasure was destroyed by the heavy, elaborate, brown buckram portfolio fastened with clumsy straps and buckles. When his copy came, he gave it one look, put it aside, and I doubt if he ever deliberately looked at it again. Here, indeed, was not the little but the big clumsy thing that gave the whole *Pall Mall* staff away. Seventy copies were printed, fifty were for sale. The second edition of "Pen Drawing", the "London Etch-

ings", "The Devils of Notre-Dame" were all three published in 1894.

In this busiest of busy years he was obliged to leave London earlier in the spring than usual. We planned a long summer in Spain and, on the strength of it, asked Helen to join us again. But other commissions poured in. She had to be put off. He hated to tell her so and he wrote to thank her when she bore her disappointment with philosophy. His work overflows into the letter, nor can he keep out of it the comparative failure of the exhibition of his Devils at Dunthorne's gallery, and the tragedy of the death of Madge Henley, Henley's only child. Henley was the more crushed by her loss because about the same time the *National Observer* came to an end, the proprietor not finding its literary reputation sufficient compensation for his financial loss. Henley's "young men" were scattered, and the breaking up of his paper contributed to the decline and fall of our Thursday evenings.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

14. Buckingham Street
Strand W.C.
2.24.94

Dearest Helen

You are really very good—when you ought to be mad—But everything is in a mess—and I dont know "were 'e are"—which is the latest. Not that things are not coming off—they are coming off too much—in fact Ive been asked to do no less than *six series of things this summer* and Im in a perfect muddle—and for three or four weeks I dont know where Im going or what I shall do—Everything may hence go wrong and I may stay here but that isent probable—but I cant tell you anything yet for a few weeks—and if everything does go wrong you wont be broken all up. I want you to come over but

I cant very well lug you up the Alps—physically you know Im not up to it. Nor protect you from howling savages—can I? But just wait a little and I hope everything will straighten out.

James is delighted with his collar and is exposing it in Buckingham St. at this very minute

Your comments and catalogue were most practical—and useful. Only I aint a prophet because they never are appreciated in their own village—the show here was *not* a howling success as I was boycotted by most of the papers—but though nasty I still survive—and that makes your true Briton so mad. My forty three young ladies pursue me even here—they call on me without being invited—they are a nuisance—and they, some of them, quite take me seriously. Only fancy.

Madge Henley has completely broken up the Henley family—they have shut up the house at Croydon and are at College St. And I think will go away to Paris soon—

I see very few people but the Tomsons—we are fearfully busy—I am in the midst of proofs and do nothing—Give my love to Every body—and wait a few weeks—and do not mind my not writing—

Jo

He was more than ever reluctant to go when the time came. Year by year this reluctance amounted almost to an illness. The old duel never ceased between the artist who asked for nothing better than to stay quietly at work where he was, and the "born journalist", who could not refuse a new commission that held out hope of the beauty he craved. The result of the conflict was apt to be physical exhaustion, physical prostration. This year to go was the harder, because the

Buckingham Street chambers were the first home of his own he had ever had, the studio the first one entirely to himself, the press a luxury he hitherto had been unable to indulge in. Then, it was provoking to leave on the eve of the first appearance of the *Yellow Book*, a venture in which he felt a personal interest. Beardsley, ever grateful for that *Studio* article, would come to consult him about new schemes and when the *Yellow Book* was gradually taking shape, long before any announcement was made, brought Harland to talk it over with him. They begged for ideas, begged for contributions. He rather laughed at the qualifications of these inexperienced art and literary editors, but he made suggestions out of his unfailing supply and let them have the etching of Le Puy for a full-page reproduction. He approved of the proposed independence of the quarterly, of the yellow of the cover, which he could already see, a telling note on the bookstalls, of the change in the design for this cover with every number. He thought it an advantage to have an artist and a literary man as editors instead of outsiders who made a business of editing. In this respect the *Yellow Book*, like the *Butterfly* and the *Dial*, would be carrying on the tradition and policy of the *Germ* and the *Hobby-Horse*. Beardsley and Harland discovered surprisingly few young geniuses, did not disdain Royal Academicians, delighted to make room for Henry James and Edmund Gosse, and almost the only new note was struck by Beardsley. Provokingly the first appearance of the *Yellow Book* was down for the fifteenth of April, by which time Pennell was due in Dalmatia. The editors were disappointed not to have him at the dinner to celebrate its launching

at the *Café d'Italie* in Soho. They accepted me as his representative and did it gracefully by placing me in the seat of honour between them at the high table. I might add that never have I sat through a duller dinner, though all about me was talk and laughter, John Lane, Mrs. Craigie, Kenneth Graham, Max Beerbohm, and the many others evidently not finding it an occasion for meditation and gloom. But each editor had to make a speech and both were bracing themselves for the ordeal.

CHAPTER XX

A STRENUOUS SUMMER IN DALMATIA, ITALY AND SPAIN (1894)

Pennell shrank the more from the Dalmatian journey because Miss Preston refused to write the articles, refused to stir from London unless he would travel down to Dalmatia with her and her niece, Louise Dodge. This was because, as a consequence of her visit to Provence without him, her Provençal manuscript had waited unillustrated and therefore unpublished for months in the *Century* office. I was uneasy. When work was in question he could ill adapt himself to the habits and movements of others. With me it was different. Ours was understood to be a working partnership. He went his way, I went mine. Early or late as he might be, however he might alter his day's programme, I was prepared to fit in my engagements and movements to suit his convenience, knowing that artists are not like other men, he least of all. Miss Preston and Miss Dodge could not be expected to order their time according to his uncertainties. Besides, when travelling with two women, many details in connection with trains, boats, luggage must devolve upon the one man of the party,— I had reason for uneasiness. However, though they ended the journey not quite as good friends as they started, they were still friends, a fact which was a

credit to them all. And Dalmatia repaid him for discomfort. His letters to me vanished at the London warehouse, but I remember how full they were of his trials with "the ladies"—a white hat sported by Miss Preston on the steamboats between the various ports her crowning crime. But I remember, too, how eloquent he grew over the marvels of Dalmatia. Some of these marvels are in his letters to Helen. Even in Transylvania, where the peasants' dress changes in almost every town and village, he had not found such endless variety.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

Zara
Dalmatia
19 April 1894

My dearest Helen—I suppose, in fact I know I am an awful fraud. I promise you all sorts of things which I never do—First I promised to write to you often and I havent and then I promised to bring you over this summer, and well, now I know I cant. And for this reason. I have no idea when or where I could meet you—I hoped it would have been in Rome and then we might have gone on to Spain together but, though I am going to both places Ive no idea when—I shall get there—and I simply cant meet you anywhere—its very hard but I dont see how it is to be helped—much as I want you to see things—that you want to see—Ive really got to look after my "drawrin" or else—there wont be anything to draw—and this time Im afraid you will have to be given up. Im really as sorry about it as you are and I wish it could be helped—but Im afraid it cant. The only thing is I shouldent have made promises I couldent carry out—Im awfully sorry and distressed and I only wish you were here to cheer me up—instead I have to content myself with Miss Preston—and she isent very satisfactory. But the places are lovely and I wish you could see the people.

the gentlemen look
like this

This is a real laidie and she is carrying her kid, and the week's marketing. The gents dont carry anything—they are carried on donkeys.

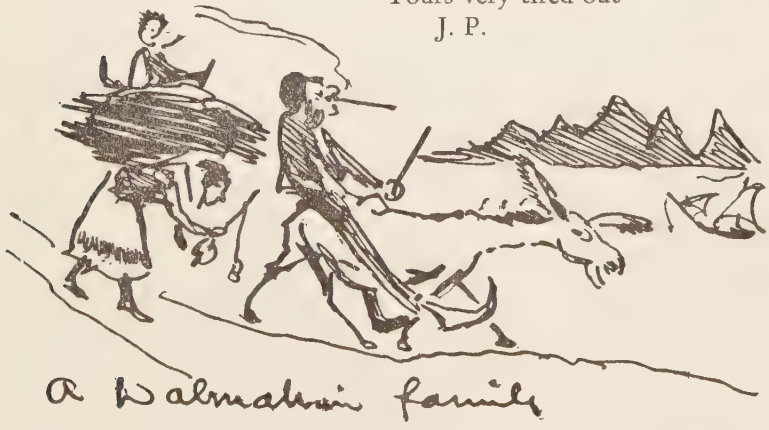
If you really think Im worth having anything more to do with you might write me a nice long letter to

Sebasti and Paoli
Bankers
Rome

but I dont know if you will—Still Ill make all your loss of this summer up to you somehow and do write—and do tell me what you are doing—and what the family is doing and everything.

And do forgive me for swindling you out of the summer but really I couldn't help it.

So do tell me so—
Yours very tired out
J. P.



Write to Rome

Cattaro
Dalmatia
5.29.94

My dearest Helen
Ive meant to write you for days but how can I when a person like this has to be drawn

And then as I try to, another sight a camel goes by

I find
out later
he belongs
to a

menagerie—but the whole place is a circus—and Im constantly interrupted by a gent in a minaret yelling through his nose into my bedroom window something about Allah is Allah

and a Jew wants me to buy all creation and a Turk

treats me to Karfee—and Miss Preston wants to have me do something for her—by the way Ive just got her started back to England and a lot of porters are fighting to carry my bags aboard the steamer

And I only wish you were here to see it all—you really did help me last summer—and well, I hardly think—well as they meant—these ladies did

Yours Jo

He said good-bye to his ladies and they returned to England at the end of May. Miss Preston's articles and the illustrations came out in the *Century* in March, April and May, 1895, and an overflow of the illustrations in the *Studio* for June the same year. He had worked hard. But he left Dalmatia to work harder in Italy for the Macmillans, illustrating Mrs. Oliphant's "The Makers of Modern Rome."

By some freak, though all his letters to me from Dalmatia are gone, a few from Rome escaped disaster. With the first I received, I realized how hopelessly tired he was, how the strain of the journey with Miss Preston told on him. To add to his misery, many of my letters never reached him in Dalmatia and were slow to reach him in Rome. Hearing nothing, he was sure the drawings he sent home were lost, also the Dalmatian aprons, tablecloths and embroideries collected by the way. He did not understand why the expected "Pen Drawing" proofs did not turn up; he feared drawings lent him for the book had gone astray; he chafed because the Macmillans did not answer his question as to how soon they wanted the Roman illustrations. He worried over the details to be attended to before I joined him. He was seedy, irritable, wretched. He was upset by the tragedy in our circle of friends; Graham Tomson had left Arthur and was living with Marriott Watson in order to obtain her divorce. Pennell's sympathy went out to Arthur who, he thought, had been badly treated. He had no use for that sort of romance. The affair got on his nerves and he wrote of it to Helen: "This summer there have been all sorts of unpleasant—and maybe some pleasant—complications among the people you

met—only that set is all smashed up—and only Henley is left of it."

However, as I hoped, when our correspondence was straightened out and he began to forget his annoyances in Dalmatia, the charm of Rome took hold of him again and in work, as always, he found rest. He saw no one save Elihu Vedder, living there, and Henry James, passing through. In order not to interrupt the sequence of the letters, let me preface them by saying first that I was contributing a weekly cookery column to the *Pall Mall* and that of every new dish he chanced upon he wrote me; second: that for the *Chronicle* and the *Star* I went to a large exhibition at Glasgow, and to help me he reminded me of Arthur Melville, to-day forgotten as he should not be, and Crawhall, that immensely brilliant draughtsman.

TO MRS. JOSEPH PENNELL

Friday
unknown

It was decent of you to go to Macmillans—but the fit is over and I shall go on tranquilly now—despite the fact that I went this morning to do the *Tarpeian Rock* and found it had been made into a clothes drying place—owing to its exposed and airy site. Still I got something—also on my return—found your letter—about the Macmillans. I suppose you wrote a lot of letters to Dalmatia which I never got as almost all my questions remain unanswered (those I asked yesterday)—as to the Tomson business I'm afraid my sympathies are with Arthur—as to the others I dont think much of them—but what will become of Tommy? Now are you coming—all the books [for review] could be sent out by Bowen—only wait till the drawings from Dalmatia turn up. They were sent from here two or three days ago and they told me at the bank they would take 12 days. After Ive got through here we might go to Lucca or Venice or somewhere and

loaf as Macmillans are so decent—and they certainly are decent—and then on to Spain—at this time of the year we must go by Genoa and it seems better to go together than separately—Because if you dont join me here in Italy I shall have to hang round in Gib for you, and *we might do the races in Siena* too if you came out before the 1st July—So far it hasent been hot at all except in the middle of the day. There is music every night and really you deserve a holiday—so come as soon as you can—if you dont want to come down here stop in Florence with the Lelands but I want you—do write often

J.P.

Monday

Kamli Pen—I have your letter?—or note of Friday—well what of the table clothes (!) Its rather funny that after all these years of avoiding the *Critic* family they should swoop down on you—I hope you said we had nothing to do—for of course she will print everything you did say. There are two things I want you to do. 1st If you havent already done so pay to Abbott Bassett, the Sec. of the L.A.W. my subscription for the year—Second—ask Macmillian for a definite answer whether the book on Rome is to be out this year—if so whether they want the drawings as fast as they are done—if not whether I can take my time about finishing up the things—when it will be better—try to make them put it off for next year.

By the way what has become of the Show at Liverpool. Did Dunthorne sell a single thing—where and what of it—

It might be worth your while to ask Chichester and De Vinne to come in and have Bale and other printing people to meet 'em. If Blaikie was only in town you could have some fun. Has Fraser been in London without calling? Did Miss Gleeson ever get the Thackeray? And bring with you Borrow's *Bible in Spain*—

J.P.

'Ad a 'appy dye at Tivoli!—

Thursday 7? Care of Sebasti and Paoli—I have both your letters—As to the Tomson Watson business, that was inevitable—and I only hope *you* wont be run in as a witness in any scandal. Certainly I should NOT, had I been in your place, had Graham R. staying with

me in the house—It of course shows that you take sides in the matter. I of course know absolutely nothing about it. But it is a nasty business—and I'd keep out of it altogether The more I see of all these people the more I despise them. Arthur, I should say, had ruined some years of his life if not the whole of it—But what of it? I went to Vedder's house twice—the old woman I could see hated me—but he talked vaguely of all sorts of things we would do. Then he asked me to his studio . . . one day I went—he wasent there—said in a note on the door would I call in two days—did—he wasent there, but I was shown through *3* studios by 2 assistants—and *2* show rooms with Omar on a reading desk and all the other things like a shop—and Ill not go there any more—

Ran across Henry James in the street—we had an ice—equal to a drink—*He* sneered at Vedder—in fact V.'s mad because he dident get the Boston Library and he has done one decoration which isent bad—All this would come in an article on Italy and her art.

The grub is good—omelettes with tomatoe sauce distinctly so—small gourds Zucchini (?) stuffed with chopped meat or cut in small pieces—heavenly—the work is going—and Im going [and the rest has disappeared in the dampness at Whiteley's warehouse]

Sunday

Everything is going all right—as usual I am quite falling in love with the place—despite the fact that yesterday when I went to do the Ponte Molle I found it gone—save the middle—the statues all disappeared save two which are on forlorn new pedestals and look so blue—and lonely—and then you remember the lovely Prati di Castello—and that long shady avenue—half of it cut down and forts and stagnant pools and mud and barracks—and unfinished tenements and stink and the view of St. Peter's ruined. All to-day Ive been on the Palatine and done two or three decent drawings. The flat pens are immense—please get some more of them before you come—Perry's *auto-script*—you can get them at a fancy store almost next door to the Lyceum pit entrance in the Strand. And see about the insurance before you come away—You always seem to have all the drunks and disorderlies when Im out of it—Even the restaurants are getting better or Im finding good ones—the successor of the Posta

is excellent—Ive done 2 really good things of Keats' and Shelley's tombs and am going to have them reproduced—They may prove at least a tin mine.

Are you coming soon?

J.P.

Thursday

I have your letters of Sunday and Monday—all the enclosures, save the one I send back, have been answered by tearing them up. Dont forget to put in Melville and that clever Newcastle man—I forget his name—who does bull fights and other things in water-colour—whose father was Keene's friend—and say something about Strang—

Ive gone two or three times this week to the *Poste Restante* but they seem to have liked your letters so much in Dalmatia that they have kept them.

I want to see the title page of Pen Drawing and have written Macmillans twice about it, but they havent sent it—make em—and also see that they get the table of illustrations and index as full as it was before—They are going to try to do it.

I dont want a chapter about special correspondents—only some lines.

Vedder has vanished and Henry James I havent seen any more in gorgeous turnouts. I suppose he has gone to Florence where he told me he was going to "stay with a man".

If the Preston has turned up ask her when the 1st race at Siena comes off,—we can at least do our article on it—The stuff she read me in Cattaro was rot. I would have made *you* tear it all up.

As to *The Chronicle* Bowen might be instructed to send on all the mags for August and that would be all right.

I dont want any clothes, I can buy em here—You had better bring the Irving books and they say Col. Hay—wrote a book called *Castilian Days* which is good—If you can get it (Gay and Bird) bring that.

As *The Century* has never said anything more about the Whistler lithos why dont you write *Harper's* about that article?

J.P.

Thursday

I was really very seedy yesterday but am all right again to-day. I suppose I ate something or sat in the sun. I dunno what.

I think Vedder means to be decent but is afraid of the old woman, for he kept me up in the studio a whole morning and then said nothing about coming to the house but that we must go out and see places—His stuff is mostly uninteresting—but he has come off—

Ive been to all the ticket offices and no one knows anything about Siena. You write the Lelands and tell them to answer me here at once to the Hotel Victoria—that will be the simplest

Did the things turn up from Dalmatia—Ive heard absolutely nothing from Macmillans—

Saturday—

Your Wednesday letter has just turned up—Its just like the sparkling Harriet and the Dear Louise—the latter wrote me an 8 page letter which is yet to be answered—in fact what I couldnt stand was their devotion and gush—it meant so little for they gave themselves away in the silliest manner—thats what I dont like or rather couldent stand about them.

I hope the box came in time for you to exhibit the table clothes. Keep the Dalmatian drawings—and please MAKE Macmillans give you and bring or send on a proof of the title page of Pen Drawing and the cover.

The races at Siena seem to be abominably arranged —the 2 July and 15 Aug.—Now I cant be through by the 2 July so either I must meet *you* in Siena on or before that date which would be the best or else if we do it we must leave Rome the next day almost after you get here, so I think you had better tell the Lelands to get us rooms for whatever day you will get there, and then when the races are finished we can come on down here—If it is only a few shillings to run the insurance up to £1,500—there is more than that much stuff there.

As to Siena which is the most important take your ticket there, I'll meet you in that place—only tell me where the Lelands are, if you know, we will see the races and do that 10 year old article and come on down here—and *then* go back to Genoa and Spain

J.P.

Monday

I have your letter of Thursday—Certainly I think you had better finish up things—only you must come in about two weeks as I think I shall be through by that time. And then we can loaf for a couple of weeks—If it only keeps as delightfully cool as it is at present it will be stunning—As to your being worked out I dont doubt it—and so am I. Write and ask Harris if you can do the articles for *The Fortnightly*—and I should think the *P.M.G.* would take things too.

Bring English money—the rate of Exchange is enormously high both here and in Spain. I got 420 francs for £15 the other day—the usual rate is 37S—only you wont find anything here to buy. Certainly one dress is enough. Thank God we wont have to see any one. Vedder has vanished—and Ive only caught sight of James again in carriages with people in swell clothes and footmen—I think the man James is just a little of a snob with all his pretensions of hating people—and he evidently thought he had a suit of duds just like the middle class Italian—of ten years ago its true—but to-day that person is a combination of the Frenchman of 1830 and an Englishman of last year—and H.J. dont look like that. If you come straight through come 1st class and be comfortable—The difference isent much cant be more than fifty or sixty francs—certainly come straight by Bâle—Where are the Lelands? Keep the Dalmatian drawings—they are not finished.

Did Menzel ever answer?

Dont forget the insurance—

Ive finished *15 drawings*

J.P.

After many letters, many plans, many changes, our meeting was at Siena, where he braved the British respectability of the Grand Hotel to please the Lelands, who were established there for the summer, and where we saw the Palio and did the article commissioned ten years before. We lingered in Genoa—"A city of Palaces" his description—which he always wanted to illustrate

and was never given the chance. We lingered at Marseilles, eating *bouillabaisse*, drinking coffee on the Cannebière. We lingered on a tramp steamer from Marseilles, loafing along the Spanish coast with stops at Barcelona, Valencia, I hardly remember where, dining under an awning on deck, dozing in endless sunshine. We lingered a day in Malaga, another day in the train through Spain's grim mountains—grim towns crouched on their lower peaks, at every station the agonized cry *Agua! Agua!* from weary women, laden with earthenware jars of Spain's greatest luxury. It was unspeakably hot, too hot to stay down in Granada. We put up at the *Siete Suelos*, just outside the Alhambra walls, entertained some vague idea of moving to a *pension* within them, but the courage failed us. In the overpowering midsummer heat of Southern Spain, the most we could do was to stroll under the shade of many trees to the courts and terraces and gardens of the Alhambra or the Generaliffe. Day after day the sun burned into the great plain below, never a cloud to throw its shadow on the mountains beyond, never a drop of rain to cool the parched air. Day after day Pennell worked, refusing to let so trivial a drawback as heat keep him from his appointed task—a task which to him was the supreme pleasure.

Almost all his drawings that summer were in pen-and-ink, the medium with which he could express most eloquently and truthfully, the brilliant, blinding sunshine of sun-drenched southern lands. In their own country he understood better than ever the technique of Fortuny, Casanova, Rico, Vierge. His drawings in the Alhambra in Granada, in the other Spanish towns

of our journey, glow and sparkle and shine, as flooded with light as the landscape and the architecture. He forgot everything in his study of this brilliancy. But Andalusia in July and August did not let him off so easily. He had to admit he had hitherto known no heat like it. "You have no idea how hot it really can get down here," he wrote to Helen, and on our last day he went to pieces. I was frightened, so complete was the collapse. As we sat in the shade of the wooded hill he threw a roll of notes in my lap. "Pay the hotel bill, settle all accounts, tip everybody," he begged—he had not the strength to do it himself. And yet, nothing would persuade him to wait a day or two and rest by doing nothing.

No less amazing in his sudden recovery than in his sudden collapse, he was up the next morning before dawn and we caught the train to Cordova which, in the fashion of Spanish trains, started at the most unseemly and inconvenient hour for travellers. At Cordova he could scarcely take time to lunch, in his eagerness to see town and mosque. The streets were empty, Cordova like a City of the Dead, for the sensible natives shut themselves in, and the torrid heat out, taking that *siesta* which helps them to forget. Seville was an oven, but its streets under awnings were for him more than compensation. Other towns on our route were no better. Madrid was "a vile hole"—his words—save for a bull-fight, the Prado, and Velasquez. From Madrid London summoned me to the round of the galleries and the reviewing of books. I went unwillingly, dreading what might come of months of summer and sunshine. He felt uncertain of himself, but, stoically, went back to

Granada to do the things in the town which he had left undone. He wrote to Helen he had never been so seedy before; "Ive had a very bad time—everything seems to have gone wrong—since the first week I was in Rome, work has gone most vilely—Its all my own fault for everything here is lovely only I cant get the beauty of it."

London, though not looked upon as a health resort, revived him. His sudden revivals never ceased to astonish me. I have known him to look like death after a long day's cycling on French or Italian roads and to recover on sweet syrup and water in a wayside *café*. London and the work that had piled up during his absence were the cure this time. One shadow, however, fell upon his delight in being again in his studio, again hanging on the wheel of his press. In December, Whistler came over from Paris with Mrs. Whistler, that she might consult an English doctor who gave no hope. Whistler's despair was terrible to see and Pennell could not but suffer with him.

CHAPTER XXI

A *DAILY CHRONICLE* EXPERIMENT · THE SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS AND THE LONDON GARLAND · THE CENTENARY OF LITHOGRAPHY (1895–1896)

It was well London proved a tonic, so little leisure was there to be tired in during the next few years. Pennell had begun to lecture on illustration to the general public in the principal English towns,—in his words, "Educating the Provinces in the Glory of Illustration"—and quickly tiring of it. He was continuing his lectures at the Slade; on the point of resigning the post, however. He enjoyed teaching, did not confine himself to hours, was generous with his advice to those who sought it, whether at the end of the lecture on Monday afternoon or at Buckingham Street. The work of one or two students he thought good enough for a place in a new edition of "Pen Drawing": Robert Spence and Miss R. M. M. Pitman. But, to him, an hour's lecture once a week was not teaching; a waste of time rather. He suggested practical classes and the chance to teach as well as talk. The Slade could not, or would not, meet the expense. The County Council looked into his scheme, considered it seriously. Sidney Webb became involved, and there were dinners and talks with him and Mrs. Webb. Nothing came of it.

The County Council had not attained the confidence and enterprise that led in the course of time to the excellent County Council Central School. Pennell, discouraged, determined to resign from the Slade, meanwhile preparing his lectures for publication, first in the *Art Journal*. The titles explain how practical they were: "What is an Illustrator?"; "The Equipment of the Illustrator"; "Methods of Drawing for Reproduction in Line"; "The Reproduction of Line Drawings"; "The Making of Wash Drawings and Their Reproduction." These articles ran through five numbers during 1895 and in the autumn Fisher Unwin brought them out as a book. In a copy autographed for Devitt Welsh years afterwards, Pennell wrote: "Dear Welsh. If the artists of the United States had studied this book, illustration in this country would not be as rotten as it is. Joseph Pennell, 5. 12.1918." Nor did work in England interfere with work for America. It was in the mid-Nineties that we contributed a series on "London at Play" to the *Century*, studied "London's Underground Railways" for *Harper's*, and for *Harper's* also journeyed "Around London by Bicycle." "Smells of the Lamp," Clement Shorter wrote of this article. How could it be helped? We were meeting literary people of other years with almost every turn of the wheel.

In the winter of 1895 Pennell had his first experience as art editor. A County Council election was to be held and,—it is hard to say why,—the editors of the *Daily Chronicle*, a liberal paper, thought to win it for the Progressives "with art as an aid." Massingham planned a series of illustrated articles on the Council's activities, and asked Pennell to take charge of the illustrations.

He was given a free hand, no limit set upon cost, no conditions exacted save that the drawings should bear some relation to the text. He jumped at this chance to show what could be done in the illustration of a daily paper; to get the best was his sole concern. He went to Whistler, reproduced "The Black Lion Wharf" on a large scale, to prove that enlargement no more than reduction, combined with newspaper printing, could disguise the beauty of beautiful line. He went to Burne-Jones, William Morris, Walter Crane, determined to represent all schools and styles. He went to the younger illustrators, A. S. Hartrick, E. J. Sullivan, Beardsley, Phil May, Raven-Hill, Maurice Greiffenhagen, Bernard Partridge. All were willing to contribute, all understood the importance of the experiment under his guidance.

To only one or two drawings was the shadow of an objection raised. It was feared that Beardsley's design for a ballet costume to elevate the Music Halls might disturb Progressives from the suburbs, but Beardsley, appealed to, enveloped his dancer in voluminous draperies decorated decorously with fig leaves, and all was well. Another Music Hall subject, by Walter Sickert, was rejected, for no obvious reason, and Pennell hurriedly looked up one of his own unused drawings left over from the Anstey article. He took no rest. His nights were sleepless, his days a whirl of letters to and visits from artists, editors, engravers, and printers. He has told the story of the ruinous cost which even the advertisements could not cover, of the first copy of the first illustrated number printed in the presence of proprietor and managing director. It came out splendidly

but the next was solid black, and further trials coated the ceiling with ink. Everybody despaired until at last, lying in his bed, sleep impossible, he evolved a scheme that saved the situation. It must be remembered that the illustration of a daily paper was not at that time the matter of course it is to-day. If, artistically, Pennell as editor triumphed, politically he was scarcely to be congratulated. The Progressives lost twenty-five seats, just about the number of drawings published.

He sent an amusing account of it to Helen Robins, his letter dateless but evidently written in April, the month the first Dalmatian article, "Beyond the Adriatic", appeared in the *Century*. Whistler's "new row" was the first trial of the Eden Case, before the Civil Tribunal in Paris; "Stickit Crockett" is S. R. Crockett of "Stickit Minister" fame.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

14. Buckingham Street
Strand W.C.

My dearest Helen—I know Im no good, and its been months since Ive written anyone. But I didnt feel up to it till lately—It would have killed you in Spain. And for the last six weeks Ive been run to death. Maybe Elizabeth has told you how I was asked to start an artistic end to *The Daily Chronicle* and for weeks I had to grind day and night but it came off all right in the end and I got Burne Jones and Crane and Whistler and everybody to draw for it and there was an awful to do over it—and yesterday the progressive party which the drawings were *supposed* to help were licked all to pieces and that's the end of the whole show, but the drawings were *beautiful, lovely*—Then Ive had my lectures, got a hundred and fifty or more or less embryo illustrators on my hands at University College, and private lectures—and talks at Toynbee (?) (is that right) Hall and I am to go round the country like a show—and oh Lor how have

I got time to attend to my own work a most important part of which is writing to you?

The Dalmatian article the first one is out—it looks vile—and the drawings are so much reduced they had better have left them out altogether. William Penn, Bowen, Elizabeth and I have had influenza horrid—and we all drank quinine till we are deaf and have to yell at each other. Aubrey Beardsley is coming over I believe with John Lane and if you promise to lose your heart to him I'll give him a letter to you.

Whistler was here yesterday very full of his new row in Paris and he just missed George Moore who is agin him—had they met—heaven alone knows what would have happened—also the Stickit Crockett with a verra swellit head came in though he finally consented to sit on the floor with William Penn and they played nicely together. There are I suppose the usual amount of scandals and developments of the same but I forget most of those I know and dont know most.

Mrs. Whistler is here very ill. George Steevens' Missus has lost her money. Ive heard nothing of the Whibleys for ages. Altogether I dont exactly know where I are, nor do I yet know what we are going to do this summer. There are no end of plans but nothing is settled therefore I shant break any promises as I did before by not making em.

Give my love to everybody

J.P.

The Daily Chronicle illustrations were an experiment. He hoped the Society of Illustrators, founded the year before, upon which he squandered more energy than he could afford, would be a permanent institution. He believed it should and could do for illustrators what the Society of Authors did for writers—protect their interests, defend their rights, ensure their copyrights—and he knew that only a representative organization could achieve these ends. I quote Mr. F. W. Sullivan, who became the Society's secretary a few weeks after

it was started, and who can best tell why it was a failure despite Pennell's hard work and devotion.

. . . . . I know that it owed its inception largely to Joe Pennell who was the most energetic of its apostles. In the early days a meeting of illustrators was called in the West End (I forget where) and two or three hundred people attended under the Chairmanship of Mr. W. L. Thomas, chief proprietor of *The Graphic*. He had nothing to say and the proceedings—if any—were going to rack and ruin until Pennell got up and delivered what he used to call one of his "jibbers". Perhaps he spelt it with a g if he ever did spell it. He put some life into the thing and ultimately the Society got going with about 400 members at a subscription of ten shillings and sixpence *per annum*. It never made great headway or did anything of outstanding importance and there was always a difference amongst the members as to what its objects were or ought to be—some wanting it run on the lines of a trade-union and others opposing that view. Perhaps the worst defect was that we had a Committee of twenty-five and a quorum of seven. There were regular monthly meetings and it was seldom that the same quorum attended. Hence there was no continuity of policy or effort and sometimes there was no quorum

Sir James D. Linton, popular as an illustrator, with the title dear to the British public, was the first president; Whistler, Seymour Haden, Holman Hunt were among the vice presidents. Almost every English illustrator was a member. But the Society languished, as its secretary records. To wake it up Pennell suggested a monthly informal dinner to which an illustrator of an older generation should be invited. One was held; Holman Hunt the guest. The younger men were prepared to be respectful, but Holman Hunt began to talk and, as usual when he talked, did not know when to stop. He exhausted his audience, with the exception of Pennell and the few who were ever ready to listen when the

Illustrators of the Sixties were the subject. Alfred Parsons' election to the Royal Academy was the excuse for a more formal dinner—at the Holborn Restaurant, which presented him with a bronze medal. He "amused himself by rolling it about on the floor for a kitten to play with", Mr. Sullivan remembers, adding the comment, "I suppose he was used to medals." The Society continued to languish. Desperate, Pennell suggested the publication of a book illustrated by the Society, to reawaken interest and make money, without which nothing could be done: an anthology of poems on London by British poets, for each poem an illustrator to contribute a drawing. Henley, who had put the soul of the great town into his "London Voluntaries", consented to edit it with the Macmillans for publishers, and "The London Garland" for title. Whistler allowed a "Nocturne"—"*Blue and Green*" now in the National Gallery—to illustrate Henley's lines on the Wind Fiend settling down "to the Black Job of burking London Town." Pennell's drawings were for "In Westminster" and one or two other of Henley's London poems. Hartrick, E. J. Sullivan, Abbey, Parsons, Sandys, Raven-Hill, Arthur Rackham, were well represented. The rank and file also contributed and when the drawings came in, the socialistic trade-union equality bubble burst. Some were shockingly bad, some shockingly commonplace. All had to be taken for all had been asked for and given. Pennell and Hartrick were appointed to submit proofs to Henley, then living in a remote part of Barnes, his house, dark and gloomy, low on the riverside. In a recent letter to me Hartrick recalled the dramatic incident:

The Society of Illustrators and the London Garland

You will remember *The London Garland*, the Album produced by the long defunct Society of Illustrators, which also owed its existence to Pennell's indefatigable energy and enthusiasm. One awful day of storm and persistent rain Pennell and I set out for Barnes to find Henley. With us we had all the proofs of the illustrations on which we proposed to extract his blessing and at the same time hurry Henley up with his own proof, an even more delicate operation. It must have been the end of October or early in November, for the work was to be ready for the Christmas market. After various adventures in busses (the old horse ones) and on foot, the journey threatening to become interminable, we reached the house, more or less drenched, in a cab. It was some where on the tow path near Barnes railway bridge and at that time must have been one of the most inaccessible places in London.

We were shown into his study, a room upstairs, and there we found him at his desk,—windows shuttered and bolted, curtains drawn, and a lamp lit,—a Viking Lear, his red hair just streaked with white standing wildly on end. He had only lately lost his little daughter and certainly looked more than a little mad. He started in at once cursing the weather and the place, explaining in an extraordinarily tragic manner how the tide in the river outside was taking his life away; bit by bit every day; so that he had to shutter the windows to be safe. After a little time he calmed down somewhat and we ventured to explain our wants and started to show him the proofs of the illustrations. As you may remember, being all gifts of members, they were a rather mixed lot. He looked at one or two unfortunate "duds" and in an instant turned on us like an enraged cockatoo, damned us up and down in that vocabulary both lurid and varied for which he was celebrated. He swore he would not allow his name to appear in such company, etc. I thought it was all up for Pennell's temper was inflammable, but he kept it marvellously while Mrs. Henley stood opposite and frankly laughed loudly at her husband. She was a nurse and it may have been deliberate; anyway, after a time, the outburst died down and she took us all down to tea, Joseph still carrying the proofs with him. Then after a time Henley, perfectly subsided, asked to look at the proofs again and in a little while was roaring with laughter and joking about the weaker ones.

Finally, he did pass them with a blessing and we went off back in triumph, with the promise of everything being ready for Macmillan in time. It was not quite so but that is another story and any way, on this occasion, Joseph would have earned full marks anywhere for tact.

The last effort to revive interest and to hold the Society together was a second formal dinner in the autumn of 1896, to celebrate the publication of the book. Sir James D. Linton presided, Sir Seymour Haden on his right. Whistler, his first public appearance since his wife's death, accepted on condition he could sit, not at the high table, but with us and Heinemann. As the soup was served, he caught a glimpse of Haden. Their last meeting had been on the occasion of the famous quarrel. Whistler laughed—his shrill "Ha! Ha!" Haden dropped his spoon and ran. For the rest of the evening Whistler was gaiety itself. The Holborn's bronze medal this time went to the secretary: "the Only medal I ever got and now I've lost that." More serious was the failure of the dinner as an advertisement for "The Garland." The secretary had gone to much trouble to invite reporters, "hoping for fine notices in the next day's papers, with a view to the sale of the book. That night sudden trouble broke out between Great Britain and the United States over some Venezuelan trouble. The morning's papers were full of accounts of the trouble and the only notice our banquet received was about twenty lines in the *Daily Chronicle*." I have told the story of the ill-fated Society at length, partly as another instance of the energy for which Pennell was known and the tact of which he was not suspected, but chiefly because, on the fly leaf of his copy of "The Adventures",

the Society of Illustrators is included in a note of chapters to be added to the next edition—which he did not live to prepare and publish. The Society's failure was a disappointment, but he was far too busy to dwell upon it.

To honour the hundredth anniversary of the invention of lithography, the French Government was preparing a Centenary Exhibition. Many artists in France, in anticipation, had returned to lithography as a medium of expression. In the early Nineties their prints were the most stimulating and distinguished in the Black-and-White Section of the new *Salon*. In front of the lithographs of Toulouse-Lautrec, Willette, Steinlen, Louis Legrand, Odilon Redon, that little group of enthusiastic critics from London never failed to linger, studying, discussing, praising, wrangling. Our Buckingham Street walls blossomed with lithographs. The first number of "*L'Estampe Originale*" contributed a frieze to the Buckingham Street dining room because, the first time the prints were exhibited as a series in a London gallery, Pennell bought them in their frames and the frieze was the only free space left to hang them on. The fever spread to England, though it weakened in crossing the Channel. He could now add to his French examples the accomplished prints Charles H. Shannon and Will Rothenstein were issuing. One Friday evening Thomas R. Way, of the lithographic firm, brought a press and stones to the Art Workers' Guild, pulled proofs of a Whistler for the benefit of members, a demonstration, luckily for Way, Whistler never heard of. He brought also transfer paper, induced some of the artists to draw on it, afterwards transferred and printed the drawings,

and distributed them privately in a portfolio. Pennell's first lithograph on stone, a hurried sketch, appeared among them. His interest was thoroughly aroused.

His chief inspiration, however, came from Whistler, who had not waited for private demonstrations and public exhibitions to discover lithography. His earliest lithographs date back to the Seventies. But he produced the greatest number during the years of Mrs. Whistler's illness when Pennell was much with him. It was Pennell's privilege to see Whistler often at work—when he made that admirable portrait of Mallarmé, when old Thomas Way posed for him, when he drew in Paris and London streets. Sometimes for months at this period Whistler was out of reach of his studio and, anyway, painting required the uninterrupted concentration impossible under the circumstances. The small case in which he kept his small sheets of transfer paper he could carry easily wherever he chanced to be. Pennell was also often with him at his London printers, though from these visits next to nothing was to be learned, the Ways treating the printing room as a holy of holies into which no artist could intrude. In Buckingham Street Pennell posed, lounging in his big chair, his long legs twisted in the lines and curves I never knew any one else's legs to take, or standing, once in "*The Russian Schube*", a pose and costume Whistler was keen on painting in a large full-length portrait. But he was not yet established in his Fitzroy Street studio, somehow opportunity and strength for the work never came together, and the world lost a masterpiece.

With so much to fill his days in London, Pennell was more than relieved that only one commission forced

JOSEPH PENNELL IN THE BUCKINGHAM STREET DINING ROOM

Photograph by Elliot and Fry

him to leave town in the summer of 1895—a commission from the *Century* to illustrate Mrs. Anna Bowman Dodd's "A Cruise on the Norfolk Broads." It turned out to be just the outing he needed. He was in the open air all day, and all day working, though to him, accustomed to journey by cycle, this way of working seemed uncommonly like loafing. The simplicity of the country charmed him—the low, flat stretches of meadowland and water, the boats that in the distance seemed sailing and drifting through the fields, the ghostly effects in the morning mist, the local regattas, the secluded villages, the old-fashioned towns—Yarmouth, Norwich. He hired a Norfolk wherry, a man to manage it and cook for him. I ran down for week-ends, when we explored the near country by road, sampled the little inns, marketed in the little shops. The article was published the same year in the *Century;* the following year, enlarged into a book, by the Macmillans. He came back refreshed, prepared to face one of his busiest winters.

CHAPTER XXII

A SECOND JOURNEY TO SPAIN · HIS PLUNGE INTO LITHOGRAPHY · THE LITHOGRAPHY CASE · A HOLIDAY IN HOLLAND (1895–1896–1897)

Pennell by this time was recognized in London as an illustrator who kept his promises, a writer who could wake up his readers, a critic who told the truth and whose opinion therefore carried weight. He was greatly in demand, his advice and criticism sought because it was inevitably honest, if often unpalatable. Those three long flights of steep stone stairs to our Buckingham Street front door were climbed by many who helped to make the history of the Nineties. As I look back, I see a long procession of men busy with big or original work, braving their steepness: the Beggarstaff brothers, otherwise Pryde and Nicholson, to unroll before him their large posters that revolutionized the hoardings of London; Conder, carrying his fans and silken panels to display; Beardsley, not solely in 1893 with Henry Harland his companion and the *Yellow Book* his business, but in 1895 with Arthur Symons his new partner, the *Savoy* his new venture; Edgar Wilson and Raven-Hill on *Butterfly* affairs; Gleeson White, begging a volume for one of his series; handsome Meier-Graeffe from Berlin to talk over processes for *Pan* and invite prints or drawings; Jules Roques from Paris hunting for

English artists to contribute to *Le Courrier Français;* Ortmans, from I hardly know where, wanting articles for *Cosmopolis*, that ambitious international review of an undeservedly short existence; representatives from Perth and Sidney, as well as from Melbourne, commissioning him to buy Black-and-White for their Galleries. Endless the procession seeking his services that passed up and down those stairs often climbed by Pepys in an earlier day.

And so it was only in the order of things that Pennell, home from the Broads, should have been asked by Marcus B. Huish to write a Prefatory Note for the Catalogue of "Edwin A. Abbey's Collection of Studies in Pastel at the Fine Art Society." About Abbey's mural decorations, Pennell might have refused to write, having no admiration for them. To Abbey's illustrations he paid his tribute in "Pen Drawing." Abbey's pastels he could and now did praise. But a more welcome task was waiting. Abbey's exhibition was in October. It was followed in December by an exhibition of Whistler's lithographs in the same gallery, and again Huish asked Pennell to write the Introduction to the Catalogue, the only time Whistler ever consented to be "introduced" by any one save himself. Pennell felt the more qualified to write on the subject because he had just run over to Paris to see the Centenary Exhibition, opened in October, three years in advance of the actual date. Great Britain, through the Royal Academy, was invited to contribute. Since the days of Lane the Academy had ignored lithography, had quite recently made something of a scandal by refusing to hang a lithograph in the Black-and-White Room, asserting that it was not

an original work of art. The invitation from Paris roused Academicians to a realization of their mistake. An appeal, with sheets of transfer paper, was sent hastily around to Academicians and prominent outsiders, Charles Goulding printed the results, and in this way a collection of modern prints was got together. It was amusing that these amateur performances should have been shown at Dunthorne's in Vigo Street just when Whistler, the master, was holding his exhibition at the Fine Art Society's in Bond Street.

At the Paris show Pennell's interest was above all in the French work. The modern French lithographers he knew. He had seen a fair number of Gavarnis and Daumiers. But the lithographs of Géricault, Charlet and Raffet, Delacroix, the Devérias and the Johannots were revelations to him. He returned from a first visit glowing with enthusiasm, persuaded Fisher Unwin to take advantage of so great an opportunity, arranged that we together should write a book on lithography which Unwin could publish in the actual centennial year, 1898. This settled, he hurried again to Paris for a more careful study, and to make arrangements with Lemercier for the reproduction and use of the lithographs in the exhibition which he wanted for the book. The pace at which he was working can be felt in two of his letters to Helen. The three new books he mentions in the first are his "The Illustration of Books", "Modern Illustration" and my "Feasts of Autolycus"—"Tolly" for short. His interest, I have said, was great in my *Pall Mall* cookery articles of which this volume was a collection, it was greater in my cookery books, and he seldom made a journey without picking up a rare or

VILLIERS STREET: OUT OF THE BUCKINGHAM STREET STUDIO WINDOWS

Etching by Joseph Pennell

amusing item to add to them. The interest in Helen's hair, expressed in the second letter, was due to the fact that while she was in Paris in the summer of 1893, he persuaded her to follow the severe style of hair-dressing set in fashion for the few by Cléo de Mérode, even more by Aman-Jean's portraits of his wife in the Champs-de-Mars *Salon* that same year.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

14. Buckingham Street
Strand W. C.
6″ Oct. 95

My dearest Helen, I am just back from Paris where I went to see a lithograph show—it was interesting but the trip over and back was dreary—at night—and I was only one day in the place. I saw no one, it rained all the time—I had vile things to eat and was generally miserable. Now I am back for the winter. The only outing we have had was the article on the Broads. And my lectures recommence and all sorts of other grinds. Its nothing but work work work work. Ive been around in the part of Virginia where you were almost before you were born, you dear ancient thing, but when I shall ever see that part of the world again goodness knows. Large slabs of the Robins family have descended upon us—but otherwise things have been very quiet—Whistler spent the day here on Thursday with Elizabeth but I was in Paris and so missed him. We are to have three books out this autumn, look out for them, including Tolly. William Penn is flourishing and would send his love if not too sleepy—and he has waxed most fat also.

What of your plans for the winter?

Elizabeth says she will write when you answer her letter.

I am very very stupid

J.P.

14 Buckingham Street
Strand W.C.
Nov. 24. (1895)

My dearest Helen

I believe I havent written for an awful while—neither have you—did I acknowledge your photo—which was sweet—yes really—you are quite pretty in your old age—Only you have spoiled your hair again—really if I only had time I would come home and fix it for you.

But such an awful rush—behold a day—yesterday up early about half past nine. Rush off (William Penn just banged his head hard) to East End to draw a house—draw it—one thirty lunch with Gilder—and arrange for a whole year of work—2.30 more drawing—4.30 talk to Fisher Unwin about a big book and arrange to go to Paris for 24 hours to-morrow—5.30 go see a class of admiring feemale new women—Eugh—7.0 get home, dress and go to a dinner, public one, make a speech and also a fool of myself—10.30 much whiskey, 11.30 more whiskey—12 go to bed—there—what time is there to write—and so to the end of the chapter which now stretches out to next autumn. Next week I have three lectures and Paris—and the week following I go round with a sort of music hall show in Scotland. My book on illustration is coming out too, and Im writing an introduction to Whistler's lithograph [Exhibition]—and running two papers and modern opinion and lots more I forget—its rather fun, but if I dont write to an old lady—I love very much—she needn't get mad, but just write away—if she isn't managing America, unless she thinks Im too big an idiot to bother about which I am—if you dont believe it read the chapter on me in

F. WEDMORE'S
Etching in England

And you will see, so good-bye

J.P.

In December an exhibition of lithographs was opened in Düsseldorf. Pennell had an appalling cold that would have sent most men to bed, but he was off at once by way of Holland, taking his cycle along. Inevitably,

this study of other artists' lithographs led him to try and make them himself. He spent March, April and the greater part of May (1896) in Spain, illustrating for the Macmillans, Washington Irving's "The Alhambra", and for the *Century* two articles by Stephen Bonsal on "Toledo, the Imperial City of Spain" and "Holy Week in Seville." "The Alhambra" in this new edition—published in the autumn of 1896—was to be cheap in price, small in size, adapted to the use and convenience of tourists. Pen drawings printed in the text he thought would be most appropriate. But he packed up transfer paper and lithograph chalk with his pens and ink.

Spain was pleasanter for work in spring than in summer and he delighted in the freshness of its beauty at this season. "It is really too lovely here now," he wrote to Helen from Granada, "everything in flower, roses, roses, roses, nightingales in every tree, and the whole place is sweet with sweet smells . . . . Sometimes they let me in the Alhambra at night—by moonlight—and it is really too beautiful to write about." He experimented with the new medium. Lithography was more direct than etching. He could see, as he worked with the black chalk on white paper, precisely the result the print would give him, while on the copper plate he could never be sure what the press would get from the shining line on the dark ground. He was less free at first with the chalk than with the needle, so many were the "donts" Way had impressed upon him. The lithographs he made were pale, grey, delicate impressions of Alhambra courts, old Spanish inns, little shops. Twelve were published in a Special Edition of "The Alhambra", and the whole series shown at the

Fine Art Society's gallery in the autumn of 1896. Whistler, in his turn, wrote the Introduction to the Catalogue, which may be the reason why some critics saw in the prints echoes of Whistler. They were really a concession to the Ways and the mystery enveloping the processes of transferring and printing in Wellington Street. Pennell had not yet discovered for himself the strength as well as the delicacy the stone can yield when its possibilities are understood. His large rich prints, with their infinite variety, belong to a later stage. The exhibition was not a success. Nobody in those days cared for lithographs; few care now, for that matter. He was disappointed. "My show of lithos is a frost," he wrote to Helen, "and I am beautifully blue. So I'm painting a six foot picture therefore there isent much time for anything else." If his spirits could sink to the depths with incredible swiftness and suddenness, so also they could rise, though, eventually, more unpleasantness than failure to find a public was to come of the exhibition.

Ever since Mrs. Whistler's death in May we had been seeing more and more of Whistler. When in London, as he was the greater part of that summer, he dined with us three or four times a week. He was a man who could not live alone with grief; he had to escape from it, to be with others who were congenial and could help him forget—for the time. We did what we could. Friends we knew he liked to talk to we would ask to join us—E. G. Kennedy, John C. Van Dyke, William Heinemann, A. Henry Savage-Landor, the Fisher Unwins, Timothy Cole—"Timothy Cole, the wood-engraver, has just come to town—he is most amusing",

Pennell wrote to D. C. Thomson, and Cole amused Whistler, whose affection for him was great. Whistler was in London off and on through the autumn and winter. At Christmas he went to Bournemouth with us, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher Unwin also of the party. At the last moment, before we started on Christmas Eve, Pennell was begged by Massingham to run down to Peterborough and make a large drawing for the *Daily Chronicle* of the Cathedral threatened by some particularly atrocious vandalism under the name of restoration as, periodically, most old churches are. He in his railway carriage, as we in ours, was reading an article in the week's *Saturday Review* that aroused in us all mingled feelings of surprise and irritation: surprise that Walter Sickert could so misrepresent the art of lithography in an article ostensibly inspired by Pennell's recent exhibition; irritation that this misrepresentation should serve as an excuse for an attack upon Pennell and, through him, upon Whistler.

Pennell's lithographs, Sickert argued, were made on transfer paper—as Whistler's were, with rare exceptions, therefore they were not lithographs, not original works of art, but reproductions. For an artist to ask the price of real lithographs for "transfer lithographs", to palm off drawings made on paper for lithographs, was as misleading "on the vital point of commercial value" as to sell photogravures as etchings, which Pennell condemned in the case of Herkomer. The attack was not only unwarranted, but absurd. Senefelder invented transfer paper and, what is more, hoped that it would prove the most important part of lithography. Sickert might know nothing of the history of the art, but this

was no excuse for his distortion of facts. To write a letter to the *Saturday* was Pennell's first idea, since such a serious charge could not be passed in silence. On reflection a letter struck him as not strong enough, and he decided to put the matter in the hands of solicitors. This settled, he did not let Sickert and the *Saturday* spoil our holiday, for he was with us on Christmas Day. He wandered with Whistler in search of subjects for water colours. He shared Whistler's joyous amazement at our choice of so British a town and hotel in which to spend Christmas. While we ate our Christmas dinner he jested as lightly over his plunge into law as Whistler over the sad British substitute for the good wine in his Rue du Bac cellar. And Pennell went to see Beardsley, who was fighting against death and "quite paralyzed with fear" at Boscombe, which for him, poor youth, was "ignominiously dull." He was sorely depressed, as well he might be. The eighth and last number of the *Savoy* was printed that month and he understood well enough that the last collection he would be likely to publish was "The Book of Fifty Drawings" on the point of appearing, dedicated "To Joseph Pennell", to the man, to quote Haldane Macfall, "who had stood by him in fair weather and in foul from the very beginning."

In London again, Pennell went straight to Lewis and Lewis, solicitors with the reputation for seldom losing a case. That they were at daggers drawn with the Editor of the *Saturday*, who was then Frank Harris, he learned only after they had written and sent their official letter, and Harris, in answer, had laughed at the English of the great Lewis and Lewis, and published both letters

in the next number of his paper. Pennell found a lawsuit a nuisance. He, to whom work was the one important thing in life, resented having to put it aside for visits to solicitors and barristers. One piece of good luck was that Mr. Reginald Lane Poole, junior member of the firm, to-day its head, was great-nephew or grandson of Lane, the lithographer, and the fact that lithography was, after a fashion, in the family, spurred him on to active interest. But there was no such spur to drive Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., into the slightest show of it. Pennell had engaged him, the leading barrister of the day, on the principle that when much is at stake, half measures are a blunder, and paid the hundred guineas fee in advance without a murmur, not expecting to be snubbed for his money. At the first consultation Sir Edward Clarke struck us as curiously indifferent, inclined to believe that the plaintiff had no case and was bound to lose it. I saw on Pennell's face the expression, the concentration I had learned to recognize as the outward sign of the spirit of truth moving within him. "That is because you know nothing about lithography," he said to the eminent Q.C., and proceeded to explain. You could almost hear the frightened hush that fell upon the room where the great man's clerks, the solicitor and his clerks, never before had heard such words spoken. But at the next consultation Sir Edward was more amenable and in court was worth his fee and the subsequent "refreshers." The witnesses on the other side, subjected to his cross-examination, were not to be envied.

Pennell was as careful in selecting his witnesses. Whistler was indispensable and realized that he would

be defending himself. The case did not come up until April 5, 1897, when he was getting his pictures ready for the *Salon*. For a moment he rebelled, he would not be dragged into court by the inconsequences of Walter Sickert. "But," Pennell reminded him, "the case is as much yours as mine; you must come. Your reputation is involved. There will be an end to your lithography if we lose. You must fight." It was because Pennell was never afraid of Whistler, as most people were, that they were such good friends. "I never back out," was Whistler's ultimatum. Nor did he. He was in court early on April fifth when the case came up before Mr. Justice Mathew in the King's Bench Division. Our other witnesses were two professional lithographers, Charles Goulding and Thomas R. Way; two Museum officials, Sidney Colvin, Keeper of the Print Room in the British Museum, and E. F. Strange of the Art Library, South Kensington Museum; the sculptor, Alfred Gilbert, R.A., who, curiously, began life as a lithographer. The witnesses for the *Saturday* were C. H. Shannon, Will Rothenstein and George Moore. Mr. Shannon, apparently, was hardly less in sympathy with the plaintiff than with the defendant. Mr. Rothenstein admitted that his lithographs were made on transfer paper. Mr. Moore wanted to say less of lithography than of Degas, to the Judge's unaccountable wrath. "What's Degas?" he asked. Frank Harris could not deny that the lithographs of the *Saturday's* recent pictorial supplement were done on transfer paper and by him announced as lithographs. The mere layman could see that the defence was weak.

Pennell, in the witness box, pointed out that for the defendants to deny that a lithograph made on paper was

as much a lithograph as one made on stone proved either ignorance on their part or malice. His opponents, knowing his temper, expected an outbreak when he was badgered in cross-examination. But he was cool throughout, just a passing flame for the poor, the foolish question why, if he used stone sometimes, he did not use stone always. He wasn't a Hercules, was his answer, to lug a cartload of heavy stones after him wherever he went. Whistler, as always, was equal to the occasion. Cross-examined, he objected that "distinguished people like Mr. Pennell and myself should be dragged into court by an unknown authority, an insignificant and irresponsible person." If Mr. Sickert is insignificant and irresponsible, what harm can he do? asked the K.C. "Even a fool can do harm," Whistler said, a saying often quoted by people with no knowledge or memory of the reason of it. When the Q.C. suggested that he was sharing the costs in the action, Sir Edward Clarke interposed to ask if there was any foundation for the question. "Only the lightness and delicacy of the Counsel's suggestion," said Whistler. And this was the famous occasion when, examination and cross-examination at an end, he slowly drew off his gloves, adjusted his eyeglass, "And now, my Lord," he asked, "may I tell you why we are all here?" If the Judge was surprised, and he must have been, he never showed it.

"No, Mr. Whistler", he said with a smile, "we are all here because we cannot help it."

The evidence was in Pennell's favour. But to be in the right does not always count in a law court. The case dragged on to a second day. Sir Edward Clarke was Counsel for two other cases that came up that morning.

We did not see him again. But the Junior Counsel, Mr. Eldon Bankes, as he then was, gave us no reason to regret it. Pennell did not suffer from the extraordinary legal system which allows a lawyer to accept big fees from three clients whose cases may be tried at the same time so that not one of the three receives his undivided attention. By noon of the second day the jury brought in its verdict for the plaintiff with costs.

Rumour reached us of a sumptuous luncheon at the Savoy ordered by Frank Harris that he and his witnesses might celebrate Pennell's discomfiture. But the celebration was Pennell's at the Café Royal, where Whistler, our solicitor Mr. Poole, and Jonathan Sturges lunched with us and rejoiced. Luncheon over—"And now," said Pennell, "we deserve a holiday!" We got out our bicycles, he laid in a supply of transfer paper and lithographic chalk, we took the boat for Holland and during a week cycled from end to end of that comfortably level land. From the week's play he brought home a dozen or more lithographs of windmills and canals, little towns and many boats. Before the month was over they were transferred and printed, and he wrote to Mr. Croal Thomson: "I have just been over to Holland and have done some lithographs of Wind Mills which I'd like to show you for *The Art Journal*, if you would like to see them." That was his idea of a holiday.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WORK OF CHARLES KEENE · OVER THE ALPS ON A BICYCLE · THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS SERIES (1897–1898)

We began what Pennell called the *magnum opus* on lithography without delay. To divide the labour of collaboration was simple. The historical part fell to me, the technical to him, though I revised his manuscript and he criticised mine. To do further honour to the great inventor, in whom he recognized a lover of work like himself, we adapted the first chapter to a magazine article which was published in *Cosmopolis*. The winter of 1897 was devoted largely to hunting up our material; hours spent in the British Museum Print Room, there, with the thrill of a Columbus, discovering the rare early "Specimens" of "Polyautography" as the art was first called in England; hours in South Kensington and the *Bibliothèque Nationale;* hours in old bookshops, collecting books on lithography from Senefelder, Engelmann, Hullmandel, Ackermann, down to Atherton Curtis and Bouchot; hours in print shops and salesrooms, collecting lithographs—proofs when possible and within our means, together with the prints issued by thousands, as his own pen drawings were. Our large collection is now safely housed in the New York Public Library, to which we presented it.

Pennell, at the same time, was editing a series of Charles Keene's drawings and prints for Fisher Unwin, writing an Appreciation for it, and supervising W. H. Chesson's Bibliography of the books illustrated by Keene and the Catalogue of his etchings. Charles Keene was to Pennell, as to Whistler, the greatest English artist since Hogarth—"an artist who went on and on—did not play down to the artless—but up to the artists, and even they till after his death had little idea what a great man he was." Pennell had bought, some years before, two Keenes to reproduce in "Pen Drawing": a characteristic *Punch* illustration, "Little Duck", drawn for the wood engraver, and a portrait of Mrs. Edwin Edwards in Victorian crinoline, sitting in a Victorian drawing-room,—drawn, Pennell said, as Keene always would have drawn had it been his good fortune to work in pen-and-ink for process. To these, after Keene's death, he was able to add several finished drawings, many sketches, and all the etchings of which few people had heard, of which fewer would have heard, but for his book. Keene's possessions had gone to his brother, a bank manager, who knew nothing of art, nothing of the value of an artist's work, and thought so little of Keene's that he sold drawings and etchings for a song. Pennell was among the artists who profited. His own collection and Fisher Unwin's provided the basis for his book, "The Work of Charles Keene." What he intended it to be, he made clear in a letter to Fisher Unwin:

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

What I think is wanted is a book in which the sketches you have might be faced by the finished engravings—so that one might

see at a glance how the artist worked. In some of the later things it might be possible to have the sketch, the finished drawing reproduced by process—and the wood engraving.

I think the book should be cheap enough to appeal to the student.

In form about the size of a *Punch* Vol.

I dont advocate a three guinea affair. I doubt very much if any man alone will ever be popular at that price. . . . . .

As to the amount of introduction—it seems to me personally that all that is wanted is a description of Keene's method of work, and a sermon on that. As to Keene himself, or art, or humour, well, I dont see the necessity for it.

Early in the winter he crossed over to the Continent for a third book: Wickham Flower's "Aquitaine: A Traveller's Tales", Chapman and Hall the publishers. He was glad to return to a part of France he was at home in, to Romanesque Poitiers, to towns with which he was familiar, where he need lose no days or hours hunting for motives and points of view.

In the spring he cycled for a fourth book through Devon and Cornwall, the first volume of the Macmillans' successful "Highways and Byways." Arthur H. Norway was the author, at the time an efficient post-office clerk, afterwards ever rising to higher rank, and so keen a writer of travels that he would get up in the chill dark of the London winter morning to finish a chapter or a page before his Government duties claimed him. Pennell enjoyed working with Norway, and anyway, he was happiest on the open road, independent as a bicycle could make him, stopping where he would, and, most important, riding for a definite end. He did not know this part of England and he rode as an explorer along the rocky coast, through the deep-sunken lanes, up and down the little towns that climb so

steeply, to the larger seaside cities where the trippers go—from end to end of that historic, romantic land. With his pens and ink he carried along lithographic chalk and paper, his study of the history of lithography proving a fresh incentive to its practice. The lithographs of this series are mostly grey and tentative; they lack the freedom of the later Panama prints though, now and then, he rebelled against the printer's "donts" and broke loose in passages of eloquent black. The drawings were transferred and printed by Way and issued in a portfolio. "As far as I know only one copy of it for several years was sold," Pennell stated in his Cantor Lectures in 1914. The work of most lithographers of the day shared the same fate and it is not hard to understand why the revival was short-lived. In the summer the journey for a *Century* article, that was to become a fifth book, "Over the Alps on a Bicycle," took us both to Switzerland. Our object was to see how many high Alpine passes we could climb on our wheels. To me it was a big enough enterprise without bothering in the course of it to invent others bigger still. But Pennell was of another mind. We had got no further than Sézanne—we were avoiding Paris by steering well to the east of it—when at the *Café* in the evening he was presenting a new idea for a new article to the *Century*.

TO R. W. GILDER

Sézanne
Marne
France
12 2 Juillet '97

only I think you had better write to 14 Buckingham St. as usual My Dear Gilder—We are on our way by bicycle over the Alps;

but here in this place out of the world I had an idea, why not, when we get done with this scheme, hire or beg or borrow an *automobile*, a motor cycle, and be—as usual—the first to make a tour in that fashion. Really I think we would have some amusing adventures. We might possibly, would be blown up, smashed up or something of that sort. But really we could make a circular tour in this land—or ride say from Calais to Sicily—or do England or Russia or any other place, but the thing is would it not be worth while to be the first in the field with the motor cycle—for the globe trotter?
Please write or even if you like the idea telegraph to Buckingham St.

Yours truly and very happily after dinner
with Whistler and Boldini.
J. Pennell

From Sézanne we rode diagonally across France into Switzerland. We climbed low hills and passes to Geneva. We tackled the high passes, to and fro, to Italy and back again, over the Simplon, the San Bernardino, the St. Gothard, the Splügen, the Grimsel, grimmest, though not highest, of them all. In comparison the other passes were child's play. Out of the pushing up and coasting down we emerged nothing but bone and muscle, lean and brown as Indians. Our return route was mapped out from Bâle over the Vosges into Alsace, so that we might stop at Mulhouse where Engelmann lived and worked. We spent a morning in search of his house, another in the Museum to look up the early German lithographs as we had looked up the early English in the British Museum, the early French in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. After Mulhouse came Mars-la-Tour, Nancy, Charleville-Mézières, Montmédy, Sédan, Maubeuge and other names conspicuous in the newspapers seventeen years later when, thanks to that rapid, joyous ride, we could follow the slow tragic movements of

armies along a trench-lined frontier. And the Keene correspondence pursued us everywhere—proofs, paging, title, cover, battles of words with printers and publisher. I marvel to-day how Pennell could face it all, but it seemed a mere matter of course in his day's work.

Five books came out in the autumn of 1897: the third edition of "Pen Drawing"; the second edition of Mrs. Oliphant's "Makers of Modern Rome"; "Aquitaine"; "Cornwall and Devon"; "Charles Keene." He was not only preparing to add "Lithography and Lithographers" to the list for 1898 but was promptly convincing Fisher Unwin that as soon as "Over the Alps" appeared in the *Century* it should be made into a companion volume of the successful "Canterbury Pilgrimage." Hitherto his chance to see his books through the press was small as most of them were issued in America. The "Canterbury Pilgrimage" and "Our Sentimental Journey" were the exceptions. His experience had been varied during the last few years and, as the new books were manufactured under his eyes with a friend as publisher, he looked for greater things. He seldom went out of town in the winter, he could watch them through their every stage. No detail escaped him. Paper, ink, type, illustrations, reproductions, copyright were passed by him, and he directed the distribution of the book, the places where it should be sold, the newspapers which should have it for review.

He sent old printing and publishing traditions flying. "Public taste be damned," he would say, when it was held up to him as standard. "To me the matters of trade and taste are of small moment in comparison with the making of a decent-appearing book." If printers

refused to understand his edicts conveyed by post, he would descend upon the printing works and deliver them in person. When they objected, "Is it a crime," he asked, "for me to be interested enough in my own books to want to get them decent?" When he was admitted, if the printing had begun and he did not approve, it had to be begun over again. He would not stand the ink and paper chosen if cheap in quality or inappropriate. He would take no responsibility for mistakes. Nothing would induce him to pay for revision. He was not one of those authors who fail to read the publisher's agreement through and are appalled when they find what the unread clause on the subject lets them in for. As printers' bills were received, Fisher Unwin protested against the alterations in "Charles Keene," the first of the three books in his hands to be printed, with the Bradburys for printers, but Pennell insisted that they "were necessary to get the book right." He knew nothing about the printers' charges for the corrections in the prospectus; the bill seemed to him enormous, but it was not his affair, he wrote. A postscript to a dateless letter is typical of his unfailing attention to details.

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

I must say that I refuse to be held responsible for the last few charges that Bradburys have made. It was not my business to have got the electros, or woodblocks or whatever they printed from, repaired. In fact I never knew they were imperfect until your letter came. If any one was to be consulted as to the charges of repairing these blocks (I suppose during your absence) it was your clerks. And I am not going to be blamed for their carelessness.

As to the prospectus, it was sent to me and I returned it immediately. I never made £3 worth of corrections. If the press was stopped,

it was not my fault—I know nothing about it. It was a question of advertisement that does not concern me in the least.

As to the first, it is quite possible that Bradburys were put to a certain amount of trouble as everybody must be who wants to get a thing good. I tried very hard, and so did they, to get the book good. I believe we succeeded. That this success only cost £10 shows remarkable self restraint on my part.

He could not understand why, when their work was done, publisher and printers refused it the appropriate publicity. "Those *Punch* idiots have not yet a copy or a notice or anything in their window. Even now they dont know or want to know C.K. He never wore a top 'at." If for certain additions for which he was responsible, the publisher refused to pay, he would settle the bill. He spent liberally in order to include the artists he thought should be included in "Lithography and Lithographers", the second of these three new books. "At last I have moved things," he wrote to Fisher Unwin on October 10, 1897. "I have got BOTH Strang and Legros. The former wants 10 [guineas] and the latter 20. I am perfectly prepared to pay for the extra one and also for the printing of it—and as I have now got ALL the *big English lithographers*, I may through Lemercier, make a try for two or three Frenchmen. Of course I shall pay for them myself."

"Over the Alps on a Bicycle" was the next book on the list. In February, 1898, he was in Bristol drawing for the *Century*, but the printers had no chance to grow slack during his absence. Proofs and letters were packed in his bag and he borrowed enough time from his drawings to write and criticize. Publisher and printers accepted his criticism, appreciating the honesty of his

approval when he did approve. The book was ready in March and, thanks to his care, more satisfactory than he supposed possible. "Well, I am glad, when will it be published? It really looks better than I thought, and I hope it will go for all our sakes." One fear he had for its success. "Naturally this fool war [America's war with Spain] will ruin everything," he groaned. However, he was too far away to suffer from it as acutely as he suffered from the greater war in which he lived to see the United States involved. Nor did the work over the two books make a dull dog of him. He was as gay as ever, apparently as free from care, in a letter to Helen that same spring. A wish was expressed somewhere for a portrait by Whistler—never painted—of Miss Thomas, Dean of Bryn Mawr College. Pennell had not been in the United States since 1893, but he seemed more conscious than Americans who stayed at home of the hordes of undesirable emigrants who were descending upon it and of the difference, as undesirable, they would make.

TO MISS HELEN J. ROBINS

14, Buckingham Street
Strand W.C.
Sunday 10 April

Dearest Helen. I have, you will be astonished to learn, written to Whistler, I dont see why he should not paint Miss Thomas, he can get something out of her, I am sure no matter what a fright she may be, of course provided by that time Bryn Mawr isnt turned into a Convent with a bull ring, real Spanish one, on the Campus. Hope it may be, because the fool American Government has just declared that American artists—in Europe are *not* Americans—which is only natural, I suppose, as the country seems to be mainly in the hands of cranks, Jews and fools, whose ambition is to get rid of Americans and bring in all the niggers and Poles they can. I wish em joy of it.

I hope this letter may be seized by the Government which will then learn what I think of em.

Still Tom Janvier and I propose to start a 'privateer and go careening round and make our fortunes out of both sides, it is a lovely scheme, and if I hadent invested all my cash in a steel company, of which you may hear something, you might be taken on as Cook

Yours J.P.

Articles were coming out in 1898 as well as books: the series of "London at Play" in the *Century;* two on Stuttgart by Elise J. Allen in *Harper's;* and for that magazine he was writing and illustrating one on "How to Cycle in Europe." It was the year of the Queen of Holland's coming of age and the memorable Rembrandt Exhibition in Amsterdam. We ran over to see it for our newspapers and to take advantage of our visit to learn what we could of Dutch lithographers and lithographs that could not be learned anywhere else. Immediately on our return, a letter was despatched to Fisher Unwin. "Lithography and Lithographers" was being printed and "the South Kensington affair" was the coming Centenary Exhibition in the Victoria and Albert Museum when lithography would be very much in the air.

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

14, Buckingham Street
Strand, W.C.
Sunday

My dear Fisher,

Are you back, we are. I had hoped, as Mr. Gibson said that he thought they would be ready, to have a batch of proofs waiting me. But they have not come. When will they begin to arrive?

I also want all the lithos I sent you—their owners are yelling for them.

The South Kensington affair will be as large and important, if

not larger, than the Paris Show. And the book certainly will have the advantage of that. I think you should send copies of your circular to every lithographic printer, commercial, in the country. I suppose there is a trade directory.

You have not answered my letter about the original lithos for Whistler, written at the beginning of last week.

In the Fine copies you might put one or two of mine as well as autograph—then dont print more than you can sell.

There is no reason now that I see for the work not going on promptly. Toorop does not live in Amsterdam so I could not see him. And we may as well omit him.

Yours
J. Pennell

In May he left town on a longer journey, through North Wales for the "Highways and Byways" volume with Mr. A. G. Bradley as his author. The year before he thought nothing in Great Britain could be more beautiful than Devon and Cornwall; now he was as sure nothing could excel the beauty of Wales, rugged and wild. The McLure Hamiltons, whose summer home was in South Wales, asked him to stop over and stay with them. But his route kept to the north and a visit for pleasure could not induce him to turn from it.

TO MR. JOHN McLURE HAMILTON

Port Madoc
June 7th 1898

My dear Hamilton,

They all tell me I am clever—too clever—but I cant be in two places to oncest. So I am here and running up the coast as hard as possible. I dident touch South Wales at all, and must now get up toward Chester and home. I should like to look in on you awfully and tell you that the country toward Barnmouth is really the most

lovely in England—nothing but Salvator Rosas and Courbets all over the shop, not in the town but across the river or sea or something—on the road to Aberdovey—And what price Harlech Castle?

Just you come here for a day and you will never go back—not to this town but other towns.

Yours

J. Pennell

An interval in Buckingham Street to correct proofs, and we were both off to add the highest Alpine pass, the Stelvio, to our last year's record, incomplete without it. To meet the expense, we persuaded Mr. R. U. Johnson that the melodramatic picturesqueness of the Italian Lakes should be immortalized in the *Century* by one of our outdoor articles, and he generously added an article on the quieter charm of a French river—leaving it to us to decide which one. Our decision was for the Marne and we agreed to do it on our way home from Switzerland. With these two commissions to justify the long absence from London, we rode through Belgium, into Luxembourg, stopping there for a big cycling congress; from Luxembourg on to Trèves; down the Moselle Valley, a hot oven in August; up the Rhine; across country to Homburg for a short visit to the Charles G. Lelands, summering there.

At Homburg a shadow fell across our pleasure. A letter was waiting to tell Pennell of his Aunt Martha's death. He loved her dearly, more, I used to think, than his mother, and a son could not have been more faithful and devoted. She had his talent for work, also the thrift and independence of the Friends. She taught for many years at Westtown, and out of a scanty salary put by enough to bring her, on her retirement, an in-

come, if pitifully small. When Pennell learned how small, he added to it liberally, and it was a consolation to him now to remember that he had helped to make her old age comfortable. Her death broke the last link with his family, the last link with the old peaceful life in the quiet houses where he had listened to the Rollo Books and St. Peter's chimes. His regret was that he had never urged Whistler to paint this serene old Quaker lady, in her Quaker dress, a harmony of grey and silver.

From Homburg to Frankfort, from Frankfort to Lake Constance, to the Stelvio Pass, and he had his wish. Desolate enough on the Austrian side, on the Italian it was easier to coast than most of the others, and halfway down, the South, the Land of the Myrtle, climbed up to meet us. At the foot of the pass we were on Lake Como, and our ride round the three great panoramic lakes, Como, Maggiore, Lugano, began. "Italy's Garden of Eden" was the title of the article, when it appeared in the October *Century*, 1901. Letters were forwarded only to occasional post offices on our route and on this journey, for a wonder, Pennell spared not a thought for printers and publishers in London, though they might be doing their worst. To the glorified drop-curtain effects of the lakes we could have had no stronger contrast than the Marne, tranquil and untroubled by war and the rumours of war when we followed its windings through the well-cultivated, well-ordered land of France. The publication of this article was delayed even longer. It did not appear until June, 1906: "A French River."

In London, all had gone well, "Lithography and

Lithographers" on the point of coming out, the South Kensington Exhibition on the point of opening. For the fact of there being an exhibition in the Museum, Pennell could take part of the credit. "On the occasion of the Centenary of Senefelder's discovery, I suggested that the Society should hold an exhibition of lithography," he said in his Cantor Lectures; "the Council accepted this suggestion and formed a committee, and proposed to the Board of Education, then the Department of Science and Art, that an exhibition of the art should be held in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum and this was done in 1898–1899, and most successfully."

For the book, nothing remained save to consider Fisher Unwin's list of newspapers to which it should be sent for review. Pennell put in and took out names. Why scratch out any? Fisher Unwin asked. If Pennell's opinion of critics was so poor, why should he care what they said? This was Pennell's opportunity. He set the matter straight in a few words.

TO MR. T. FISHER UNWIN

14, Buckingham Street
Strand W.C.
Thursday

My dear Fisher,

I return the list with some suggestions, *it is not that I object* to what critics—or blackmailers—the term seems to me mostly interchangeable—say about me.

But why should you waste copies of the book in quarters where, because I have had something to do with it—it will be ignored or damned.

It is only not to waste copies of the book, that is all.

I do not think anything can be done at S. Kensington, probably they will buy it—You might try the London Library. As to lithographers—ask your brothers and get a list from them, find out the Lithographic trade organ, send it a copy.

Yours
J. Pennell

There you have his attitude always. To him it was folly to submit a book on the subject of art to a paper that had no art critic on its staff, or to a so-called art critic who was practically no better than a reporter with not so much as an amateur's appreciation of art. Unintelligent or deliberately ill-natured reviews were of no use to reader, author, or publisher.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SOCIETY OF SCULPTORS, PAINTERS AND GRAVERS · BEAUTY'S AWAKENING · MANY JOURNEYS AND MANY BOOKS (1898–1903)

To all he was doing in the Nineties, Pennell, towards the end of that crowded period, added an interest which proved anything but a sinecure. Early in the winter of 1898, after Whistler's nomination as chairman, he was elected to the Executive Council of the recently organized International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers.

During his fourteen years in London, Pennell had watched many fruitless movements against the Royal Academy and Academic convention. Within that short period the British Artists had got rid of Whistler, who threatened to lead them into too formidable an opposition; the New English Art Club had begun to dwindle into a club for Slade professors, their students and their friends; the Arts and Crafts Society had not opened the doors of Burlington House to the decorative arts; nor had the New Gallery succeeded where the Grosvenor failed. The Royal Academy remained the stronghold of art, the goal for every artist out for success while alive to enjoy it. But the spirit of rebellion was not dead, and Whistler's triumph at Goupil's in 1892 foretold that for a new secession a new public would be ready.

The idea of the International originated with Francis

Howard, who was young, had studied in Paris, taken to art criticism in London, and had the intelligence to associate with him at the start John Lavery and E. A. Walton, the leaders of the Glasgow School, and Georges Sauter, a distinguished German artist living in London. Whistler, undiscouraged by years of British indifference and misunderstanding, accepted the leadership of this group of independents who scoffed, as he did, at the British belief in a national art with zealously guarded frontiers. The first meeting was held in December, 1897. At the third Whistler was elected chairman, then president. The Society was to be like no other; a self-elected Executive Council in sole charge of its affairs; exhibitors responsible for nothing save the quality of their work; a company to manage its finances; its exhibitions to be as international as its name.

Pennell had so far seldom sent to English exhibitions. He resigned from the Painter-Etchers after four years' experience of its methods. Once or twice he showed at the Royal Academy but was disgusted when his prints and drawings disappeared in the disgraceful hanging and overcrowding of the Black-and-White Room. At the New English Art Club Black-and-White fared a trifle better but his frank criticism in the press made him an unwelcome exhibitor in the gallery. The International's policy was more liberal. Gravers were not relegated to the usual back seat but held the same rank as sculptors and painters, and with most of the Council Pennell was in sympathy. Whistler, in Whistler's way, described the New English Art Club as a raft while the International was the battleship, and Pennell seconded him valiantly in providing the proper equipment.

The first exhibition was held in May, 1898, in the Skating Rink at Knightsbridge, transformed temporarily into three large and two small galleries, in which Whistler's scheme of decoration, his velarium and method of hanging were adopted. Pennell arranged his journey to Wales for the late spring, to the Italian Lakes for the summer, so as to be free for his work on the Selecting and Hanging committees. His section must uphold magnificently his claims for Black-and-White. He toiled like a galley slave, and it was the same story year after year. If distinguished black-and-white men did not submit work he thought worthy, he hurried to their studios to commandeer their best. For that opening exhibition, he got together a fine collection to represent Beardsley, who had died but a few weeks before. He did not rest until the most distinguished French, German, Italian lithographers and etchers were included. And it was not enough to show good work, it must be shown beautifully. He was an artist in hanging—and most artists are not. A gallery arranged by him had an air of distinction. He had his definite scheme, knew where everything ought to go, hung the collection on the floor, to quote his words, rarely making any change when he transferred it to the walls. If it did not come at once as he intended it should, he would work over it until it did. Lunch and dinner were nothing to him. He would rather go hungry than stop at a critical stage in the hanging. Engagements were broken ruthlessly. Had the gallery been open all night, he would not have come home until perfection was achieved.

The Society's first years were Whistler's last—the years of his gradually failing health, and half the

time he was in Paris. If necessary, Pennell would drop his drawing or desert his press to run over to Paris for a personal consultation with his president. Nothing explains the loyalty of Whistler's friends on the Council better than one hurried trip Pennell took with Lavery at a crisis in the Society's affairs. They crossed over to Paris Saturday night, descended upon Whistler at the Rue du Bac, discussed the pressing problem with him, caught the Sunday night boat train for London—two successive nights' journey for a couple of hours' talk. Loyalty to Whistler and the Society was proof against fatigue.

Reasons to consult the president were numerous. For an interval, after the Exhibition of 1899, the outlook seemed desperate. The promoters of the Knightsbridge exhibitions, getting nothing out of them, lost interest, and the Society was obliged to find a new home, also to manage its finances itself. In 1900 the difficulty was solved by Whistler, who pronounced an exhibition in London unnecessary: the Society's international ends were accomplished by the Paris Universal Exposition, where the Society was duly honoured, among the medals awarded to members a *Grand Prix* falling to Whistler, a Gold Medal to Pennell. In 1901 the Institute Galleries were tried, an unsatisfactory makeshift, and not until 1903 did the Society find a congenial home in the New Gallery, a cinema, alas! when I last was there, but, when the International moved in, the best appointed gallery in London. To meet the financial risk ordinary members were elected and an annual subscription asked of them as well as of the Council, and guarantors were secured.

Pennell, as art critic, had long since made himself unpopular among artists. His work on selecting and hanging committees increased the unpopularity a hundredfold. Some said he was Whistler's tool—as if a man of his temperament could be anybody's tool; others said he was using the International Society for his own advancement. It made no difference to him what was said and thought. He had his standard and would allow nothing to lower or alter it. The few who understood him appreciated his eagerness, his devotion, his self-effacement. The very workmen in the gallery felt how genuine was his determination to arrange a fine exhibition at no matter what cost and would do anything for him, as willing as he to stay on over time until that end was accomplished. Because of the misunderstanding that existed in his day and has survived among some of his contemporaries who still live, I am glad to record the impressions of Mr. Frank Morley Fletcher and Mr. Georges Sauter, who worked with him and whose friendship endured through the years until the end. Morley Fletcher recalled his experience when he sent me the few Pennell letters he could find.

I wish I had kept more. Re-reading them makes the days we had together very vivid and actual again. They were very stimulating days to me and I love to remember them, and to have in that memory a link with the Joseph Pennell whom I think only a few people knew. He was never anything to me but kind and gentle and considerate and intensely sincere in all our artistic experiences. In the judging and hanging of exhibitions—especially when dealing with the work of contemporary and fellow artists—I never knew him biassed by anything but the quality of the work. Often it was difficult to get his own exhibits on the walls. They usually lay about until places had been found for everyone else.

Georges Sauter writes me:

> The International united us in common efforts, and in this connection I had rich opportunity to appreciate his rare and admirable qualities, which, however, not seldom were tarnished over with a manner that hid their true source. In consequence, only a few were aware that his brusque demeanour concealed a nature always ready to defend the serious attempts and achievements of all arts, and ever willing to give unlimited time to serve a high aim under a President of great principles, with comrades in harmony; a nature, too, which bore a relentless contempt for the shoddy and unreal. He never failed when hard work was to be done—whether it was attendance at long Council meetings, or the organization and hanging of Exhibitions—work often carried on under great difficulties, with inadequate understanding on the part of others. But, whether it meant giving up his time for days, in London, from early morning till midnight; going abroad in the interest of the International to choose works for Exhibition, for taking part in the organization of Exhibitions in the provinces, Mr. Pennell was always ready. In his ambition to get a representative Black-and-White Section neither friend nor adversary, but only the work itself counted, and no efforts were too great for him to get works of men who had something to say for themselves, no matter in what corner of the world they lived.
>
> His one desire was always "to bring the thing off."

Pennell's deference to Whistler, his president, did not put a stop to his friendship with Whistler, his fellow artist. If anything, he was seeing more of Whistler than ever, lunching with him in the Fitzroy Street studio, going with him to the Café Royal for the afternoon *apéritif*, Whistler dining with us in Buckingham Street. Our Thursday evenings were things of the past and we made no effort to revive them. Friends, once ours but Whistler's "enemies", were afraid to meet him; Pennell's plain speech made him enemies of his own. A few were faithful and new friends replaced the faithless and

the fearful. The spring brought Americans as welcome to Whistler as to ourselves, above all Mr. E. G. Kennedy, Doctor John C. Van Dyke, and Timothy Cole, by this time settled in London, engraving the British Old Masters. Théodore Duret and Boldini were often over from Paris; sometimes W. B. Blaikie from Edinburgh; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Janvier, Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Morris, Mr. and Mrs. D. S. MacLaughlan, Mrs. Custer, Mrs. Helen Whitman, Mrs. Ohl, stray West Point men, the R. U. Johnsons from America. And London contributed Heinemann, as staunch a friend as we or Whistler ever had, Landor, Mr. and Mrs. Sauter, Lavery, Walton, Harry Wilson, the solicitor William Webb, for International meetings were frequently held in Buckingham Street, Whistler and two or three of the Council dining with us first. Whistler's strength was waning, but dinner with its talk was a stimulant, the Boer War an unfailing inspiration. "Amazing," Whistler wrote to Mr. E. G. Kennedy of some Boer exploit in the April of 1901, but—"Well, well, of this more by and by when we meet at Mrs. Pennell's pleasant table", and the hours with him round that table were as pleasant to us.

On the fly leaf of his copy of "The Adventures" Pennell's note for new chapters in a new edition included just one other subject besides the Society of Illustrators. This was the Masque, "Beauty's Awakening", given by the Art Workers' Guild at Guildhall in the winter of 1899. Hitherto the fortnightly evening talk and a one day's summer excursion to some architectural monument of the past about exhausted the Guild's enterprise. "Beauty's Awakening" was an elaborate spectacle to which Guildhall offered the appro-

priate background. My memory is of a fairly short performance repeated only a few times; of harmonious stage settings for which Harry Wilson was responsible; of Harrison Townsend, the architect, in voluminous draperies, armed with the indispensable scythe to account for him as Father Time; of children dancing charmingly against a charming background; of members of the Guild, their families and friends got up as Old Masters and Old Masterpieces, grouped on the stage and parading up and down the aisles of the long hall; of the Lord Mayor and his Staff filling the audience's place of honour and fitting admirably into the general gorgeousness of colour. If Beauty was achieved, the plot did not much matter. Pennell played no rôle in this spectacle; that was not his line. But he took upon himself many practical and no less essential parts in the months of preparation, for beauty is not created in a day. He was manager, secretary, editor, general factotum beforehand, saving so many desperate situations that I was thankful he was not called upon to shelter some thirty little dancers who, one rehearsal night, missed the last train to Pinner where they lived, and were hauled about London by poor Louis Davis until an artist was found with a big enough studio to put them up in. On the evening of the show, Pennell was man-of-all-work, usher, ready for any odd job to oil and keep the wheels running. Afterwards he saw to preparing a book out of the words and the artists' designs, a shorter version to come out first as an article in the *Century*. But the Boer War was making everything uncertain and everybody nervous. Publishers fought shy of novelty and the book fell through, the article with

it. Nothing remains of the Masque, except the 1899 *Studio* Summer Number "Beauty's Awakening", which occasionally turns up in booksellers' catalogues.

This same year, the *Century*, with two dull serials in contemplation, John Morley's "Oliver Cromwell" and Walter Besant's "East London", asked Pennell not merely to illustrate them but to play the art editor in London, a task more amusing than the text. For the East London articles he got Phil May and Raven-Hill to do the figure subjects; for the "Cromwell", he suggested E. J. Sullivan and Frank Brangwyn, and most of the architecture and landscape he did himself. He unearthed engraved portraits long lying forgotten in the Bodleian, discovered rare miniatures in private collections, followed the trail of precious documents preserved by Cromwell lovers. Fortunately, he was contributing to only one other magazine the *Architectural Review*, founded by Mr. Abram, a Yorkshire man with a Hebrew name, and edited by our old friend, C. E. Mallows. Again fortunately, the illustrations could be selected from portfolios of earlier unused drawings.

During the Nineties the vogue for the illustrated travel book had become firmly established, the result largely of Pennell's influence,—not the huge elaborate publications for which Baron Taylor in France, David Roberts, J. F. Lewis and Stanfield in England set the example, nor yet the little French Albums, cheap in get-up and in price but filled with masterpieces of lithography. The idea now was a small volume convenient for the traveller to carry, well made, well written, well illustrated, and issued for a reasonable sum. The Macmillans' Highways and Byways Series was a success from

the start, and they continued it with one or two volumes every year. To Heinemann, the English publisher of Henry James's "Little Tour in France", Pennell suggested: Why not an illustrated edition? "The Best Guide Book ever written. I know because I illustrated it," is his inscription in Mr. Edward L. Tinker's copy. In the spring of 1899 the Little Tour took him and his bicycle over a route part of which he knew by heart, while the other part he had long been meaning to get to know as well. His Highways and Byways book for the year was also in France, "Normandy" by the Reverend Percy Dearmer. Twice he interrupted the journeys: in the spring to hang the Black-and-White Section of the International; in the summer to join me in Antwerp where for the *Daily Chronicle* I was reporting the ceremonies in honour of the 300th anniversary of Van Dyck's birth. He crossed from London with Lavery, each bringing a bicycle, arrived in time for the opening of the Van Dyck Exhibition with which the ceremonies closed. The collection impressed him, he must write this article himself, and we sat up till all hours, he dictating, I writing in the old fashion. And the first thing in the morning, the three of us were off on our bicycles, riding along the Belgian and French coast, Lavery as far as Calais, I as far as Dieppe, Pennell as far as Mont St. Michel, where he proposed an article to the *Century* (published October, 1904) and wrote to me to return to France as fast as possible. Familiarly as he knew France, his love of the beauty of "the French scene" had not lost its ardour.

1900 called him away on fewer long journeys, a good thing, so often did the Paris Exposition lure him across

the Channel. One journey was in June to illustrate William A. Dutt's "East Anglia", a Highways and Byways book. Another in the summer was for his own amusement, though it was the prelude to a later article, "In the Alps on a Motor Bicycle" (*Century*, February, 1904). His love of cycling had not dwindled, nor his spirit of adventure cooled. A new invention was irresistible. He had been the first to try the Dunlop tires on the open road. Now he was the first to put the motor bicycle to the test. He chose the London streets to begin on, not the wisest choice, and a story lingers in London of the machine getting away with him one day as he turned from the Marble Arch into Park Lane and met a detachment of the Black Watch. Right into the Bagpipes he charged, scattering apologies right and left—"Awfully sorry but I don't know how to stop the damned thing." He escaped unhurt before they recovered from their surprise and tried to resume the swagger of their march. After that encounter, he believed himself capable of anything, even to riding the mad machine over the Alps, which he did with no serious mishap. No one had ventured before him and the papers made much of the exploit. I was down in Dorset at the time, on a week's visit to the Arthur Tomsons—Arthur had married again—at Sydling St. Nicholas within a few miles of Dorchester. Thomas Hardy asked us to tea the afternoon of the day the report was in the *Times*. He was late coming down to the drawing-room, appeared with the paper in his hand, and, as a cyclist himself, was so stirred by the story that he would talk of nothing else. Pennell on his motor was to him the modern Hannibal crossing the Alps. The

JOSEPH PENNELL AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

same autumn, on the same machine, Pennell was running lesser risks in the English Lakes country, where he went for the second Highways and Byways book he and Mr. A. G. Bradley did together.

Eight months of 1901 were spent in Italy, on the road, in Florence and in Venice. Heinemann said the "Little Tour" was not going as well as he hoped—the sort of thing publishers have a way of saying—but it was going well enough for him to make it the first of a series and to ask for the second, in what to the illustrator was an exasperating hurry. It must be published in the autumn, Heinemann insisted. Pennell was obliged to anticipate the spring in his start for Italy, this second volume, at his suggestion, being Howells' "Italian Journeys." His idea was to revive the travel books of modern masters, hitherto published without illustrations. Undiscouraged by previous trials, he put the motor bicycle to a second and more severe test, March being an uncertain month, even in Italy. In Genoa he proposed to Mr. R. U. Johnson an article on a city too stupendous to be disposed of in the Heinemann book.

TO MR. R. U. JOHNSON

Hotel Royal Aquila
Genoa, 20th March 1901

My dear Johnson. From this you will see that the motor trip is in progress—but it has been a time—rain snow mud breakdowns smash ups etc etc but I am still alive. But the result is already amusing though Mrs. Pennell has gone back.

Though I have been through this place and even stopped—I had no idea how magnificent it was. It is nothing but the most splendid city of palaces, I ever saw. Could we not do a *wee* little article to be called

A City of Palaces.

I think we could make something stunning of it—I could easily come back as I am going to be in Italy for some time doing Howells *Italian Journeys*—nice isent it? but you ought to have seen me when I got here after 48 hours rain!!

This is not a mad man, nor a diver, nor an Arctic explorer But yours as he appeared yesterday morning

Joseph Pennell.

There was no Highways and Byways Volume for Pennell this year, the Macmillans having asked his collaboration for a second series on a more elaborate scale, each book to be published in two volumes, Maurice Hewlett to write the first, "The Road in Tuscany." The Howells' "Journey" finished, Pennell settled down in Florence. Eighteen years had passed since he

came to it, a youth, bewildered, inexperienced, frightened almost by the picturesqueness, the romance, the colour of its past. Now he had not to discover his subjects. He could go straight to them in the streets and squares, on the banks of the Arno, far up the near hillsides where he wandered of old with etching plate and needle. And he hardly got started before his summer's programme was all to remake, Maurice Hewlett deciding suddenly that he could not come to Tuscany for another year. The Macmillans, sympathetic publishers as they are, saved the situation, and the only difference was to make Marion Crawford's "Salve Venetia: Gleanings from Venetian History" the first of the series instead of Hewlett's book.

However far Pennell travelled, he could not free himself from affairs at home. He was having a motor tricycle built in France, through English agents, thinking it would carry his traps more comfortably than the motorbicycle, and the complications were endless. In London, I was running from the agents to our solicitors and from our solicitors to the agents, the machine not being produced for the ride to Venice and as a consequence a lawsuit a possibility. He was obliged to send the drawings for Heinemann from each town on the Howells' route, a rush to him unendurable, and to get prints and drawings ready for the International in London, for Dresden—where many were bought by the National Gallery and a Gold Medal awarded him—for Munich, Glasgow and Buffalo and another Gold Medal. His London pastels, a new departure, had to be mounted and framed for the Exhibition of the Pastel Society, of which he was a member. Goulding, in his absence, was

proving his latest London plates. More drawings were demanded by the *Architectural Review*, in a bad way, from which D. S. MacColl was struggling to rescue it. The *Century* editors clamoured for drawings of the Tower which, to his relief, were finished and waiting in London so that I could despatch them. Details connected with the purchase of Black-and-White for Melbourne and Perth could not be ignored. And his eyes began to bother him, a trouble ever recurring, ever alarming, which to the last he refused to relieve by wearing glasses—he would never see things the same way again, was his answer when I urged him to give them a trial. However, no doctor could have prescribed a finer tonic than the long summer in Venice—from June to November. Things quieted down in London, exhibitions left him in peace, the lawsuit was avoided, the year's books were in time for the autumn, and Venice was his to fall in love with all over again.

I feared it was a mistake when, in the spring of 1902, he set out for Italy to join Mr. and Mrs. Hewlett for the "Tuscan Journey", they in a carriage, he on his motor tricycle. He travelled best when he travelled alone or with me, but the three survived the ordeal, his work was finished, Hewlett's not altogether. Pennell went on to Spain for the third volume of Heinemann's series: John Hay's "Castilian Days", devoted chiefly to Madrid, Toledo, Segovia, the Escorial, Aranjuez.

During these years he made many experiments with new methods and tools, varying his technique with the varying effects of the countries he passed through. In fog-laden England he quickly learned that the style of

the more modern Spaniards, his first masters, could not so well express the pale light of the North as the blinding brilliancy of the South. Instead of suggesting architecture by the "shadows which give the form", he drew the form in a more conventional and unbroken line. In southern countries he kept, within moderation, to his old style, because it was more appropriate. But in some of the Highways and Byways illustrations, in his fine drawing of "Regent Quadrant" for the *Savoy*, he travelled far from the early New Orleans and Italian work. In one or two of the Heinemann books he used coloured chalks or pastels on brown paper. Each style was appropriate to the subject. The Düreresque treatment in his drawing of Mont St. Michel, he explained, was due to "difficulties with engravers and printers and my being in Europe and the books and magazines for which they were made printed here [America]. I used the methods of the early illustrators—the only time I ever abandoned my usual way of making pen drawings, the modern way. But the Mont is a mediaeval town, so it was appropriate." His departure in 1901 and 1902 was in his substitution of Russian charcoal for the pen. There are pen drawings in both the Hewlett and the Crawford books, but they are outnumbered by the charcoal drawings. When in the autumn of 1902 he was in Spain for John Hay's "Castilian Days", though he etched his fine Toledo plates, the illustrations for the book are in charcoal. He found that he could paint with it on his paper, that it was easier to manage out of doors than wash, and that, to his surprise, it was a sympathetic medium for suggesting the light of Italy and Spain and the colour and richness of their archi-

tecture. It gave him a freedom not to be had from a crowquill pen.

He had with him in Venice not only Russian charcoal, but copper plates and pastels. He had used pastel to some extent in London, and on the strength of his work there had been elected to the Pastel Society. In Venice he let himself go as never hitherto and, without neglecting his illustrations, he made one pastel after another, solely for the delight of it. His rooms on the Riva looked to the Salute and the Dogana and he studied that stately group of buildings in their ever-changing light—in the pale violet dawn, the rare greys of a cloudy day, the burning red of the setting sun—recording with masterly swiftness his impressions of effects that came and went as swiftly. In them he showed his own Venice, not the Venice of tradition. No one of the innumerable artists who have worked in that much-painted, much-drawn town ever saw it just as he saw it. His impressions retain his exaltation at the moment. He was excited, thrilled, conscious that he was surpassing himself. With each, as he displayed it, he would say, "See what a swell I am!" And yet, after packing them up with the care pastels demand, and bringing them to London, he never showed them; they were never seen again until a certain number were hung in the Pennell Memorial Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in 1926.

The books published during these few years give some idea of the amount of work he accomplished: in 1899, "Yorkshire" in the Highways and Byways Series and "A Little Tour in France"; in 1900 "Devon and Cornwall" and "Normandy"; in 1901, the "Italian

Journeys" by Howells, "The Story of the Stock Exchange" by Charles Duguid for which I cannot remember when or how he found the time, and again two Highways and Byways books: "East Anglia" and "The Lake District." The record would not be complete without mention of one book he did not illustrate but edited, and another he was asked to write—the first characteristic of his recognition of genius in others; the second, a proof that his genius was sometimes recognized at its true value.

The book he edited was Moxon's "Tennyson", republished by Freemantle in 1901. Freemantle was one of the strange unaccountable men of appreciation and ambition who flash into the limelight for a day and pass out of sight forever. I doubt if any one could say where he came from, with large schemes and little money, as publisher. He had good ideas, cared for the right things, was willing to borrow the ideas of others. From Pennell he borrowed a deep admiration for the illustrators of the Sixties. The drawings done on the wood block by the men of "the Golden Decade" were fine but "suffered terribly" in the engraver's reproductions. The illustrators did not bear their betrayal in silence. Rossetti complained, Keene complained, few did not complain. At first, as the drawing was destroyed in the engraving, the engravers had it all their way. There was no redress. When the drawing could be photographed on the block, the original remained intact on the paper as a reproach to the engraver. But until the invention of photo-engraving, an exact facsimile was not to be had. Another drawback to the books so splendidly illustrated was that they were abominably made. It is hard to decide

which to wonder at the more, the illustrator's fine achievement or the publisher's bad taste. Pennell's idea was to republish one of those old volumes in an edition beautifully designed, and to reproduce by photogravure some of the original drawings that had survived, facing them with prints from the old wood blocks. William Allingham's "The Music Master" (1855), illustrated by Rossetti, is considered the first of these books of the Sixties. But Pennell preferred for his purpose Moxon's "Tennyson", two years later (1857), more elaborately illustrated and therefore more representative. As "a curious medley of commonplace and originality", he described it. The commonplace he dropped, the originality he retained in the illustrations of the three Pre-Raphaelites: Rossetti, Millais and Holman-Hunt. He wrote a Preface, giving a short sketch of the history of wood engraving from the time of Bewick and explaining the object of the new edition. He induced Holman-Hunt, the only one of the three still living, to contribute an Introduction, which Pennell was sure would prove a valuable "human document", in the language of the Nineties. Holman-Hunt enlivened it with unsparing criticism of Rossetti, whose crimes this time were appropriating Hunt's subject, "The Lady of Shalott", and being paid by Moxon thirty pounds for a design, while the two others received only twenty-five. Collectors know how rare this edition has become, how hard to find.

The book Pennell was asked to write was the "Life of Whistler." Rarely did a commission so arouse his enthusiasm. He loved Whistler, believed in Whistler's art, was steadfast in his loyalty. Here was the opportunity

to show the man Whistler really was, the artist who towered above his contemporaries. In May, 1900, I was on my yearly visit to Paris and the two *Salons*. I remember my surprise—my alarm almost—when, on my return, as the train steamed into Charing Cross Station, I saw Pennell on the platform. It was a sign that he had something exceptional to tell me. We never greeted each other or said good-by at a railway station. Our journeys were so many, we would as soon have thought of seeing each other off in a bus for Hampstead or Kensington. "A wonderful thing has happened," he said, as the porter gathered up my bags, and, he told me, adding that his answer was "Yes, on one condition"—the condition that I should write the book with him. And so it was arranged.

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